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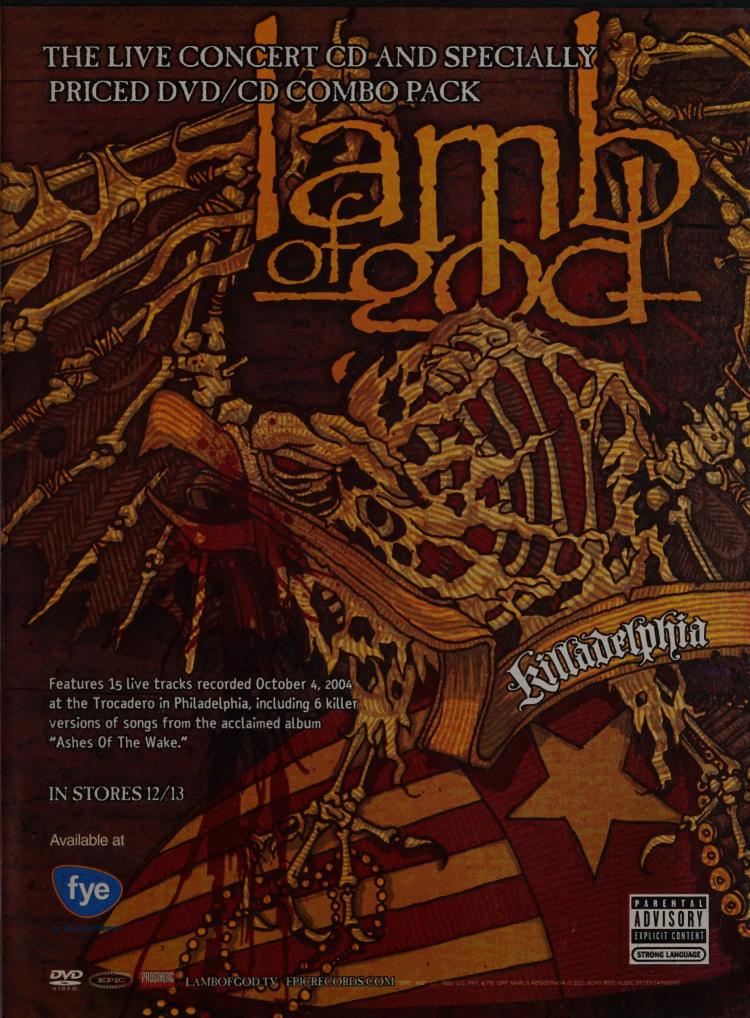


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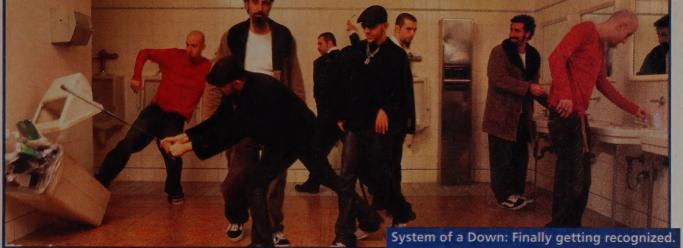
## **TOP 100s**

In case you didn't already know it (and I'm sure you do!), your All-Time Top 100 Metal Stars issue was incredible! I loved it because it made me remember some of the great stars of the past as well as celebrating the most notable hard rock figures of today. Please keep doing those special issues... you could do one on Top 100 Metal Guitarists, Top 100 Metal Vocalist and Top 100 Underground Metal Bands. Barney St. Paul, MN

Okay, so we all knew that Ozzy and Tyler and Hetfield and Axl would be in the Top 100. But what gives with old geezers like Keith Richards? I know that some people think that the Stones' Satisfaction is the first true metal song, but dude, that was 40 years ago! Mike Montreal, Canada







I'm a little confused by some of the bands that have been featured in your various recent "Top 100" issues. Who are they and why are they important to me in late 2005? Do I really care about bands like Montrose, Cream, Mountain, UFO and Blue Cheer who seem to have gone away years before I was even born? C'mon, get with it! Today's music rocks! Why waste valuable space on has-beens when there are groups like Chimaira, Finch and Trapt around making great new music? Joey Rapid City, SD

When you do your special issues, it takes you away from doing what **Hit Parader** does best— and that's cover the best bands of today in an in-depth fashion. While I really do like your special issues, I'd much rather read new interviews with the likes of Slipknot, Disturbed, System of a Down and Audioslave. I hate to be so picky, but I thought you might like to hear the truth. Cindy EI Paso, TX

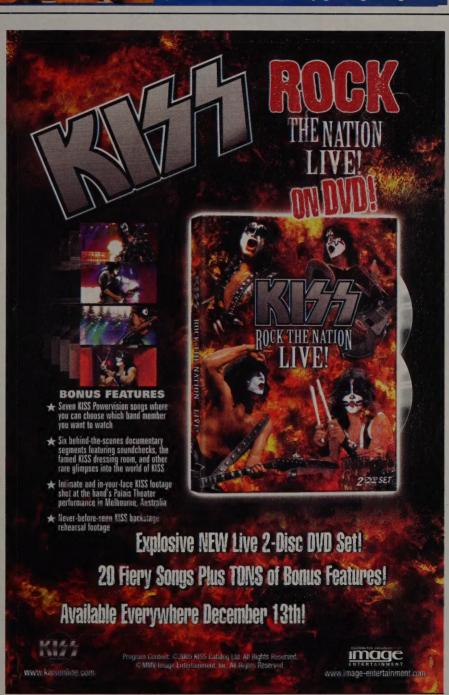
### **ALL SYSTEMS GO!**

Thank you for your recent cover story on System of a Down— or perhaps I should say cover stories. Only **Hit Parader** routinely provides two different features on the featured cover band. It's interesting to get two different writer's perspective on the same band/album/tour. You did a great job with System (who, as you might guess, are my favorite band.) Keep up the good work. Barry Seattle, WA

It's nice to see that you *finally* got around to recognizing System of a Down as coverworthy for your esteemed publication. What made you wake up? Was it the fact that **Mezmerize** made a Number One chart debut and sold over a million copies during its first month of availability? Was it the amazing reviews that album received? Or maybe it was the sold-out status of the band's world tour. Whatever the reason, thanks for getting with the SOAD program.

Why is it that every time I read a story

Lake Placid, NY



# WE READ YOUR MAIL



about System of a Down it stresses Armenian/American heritage? I'm happy that they're so proud of their roots, but I don't read that this band has Irish/American roots or that another band is German/American. We all come from somewhere, and it's great to be proud. But the fact is that we're all Americans at heart, and that's all that truly matters. Merv Andover, OH

I can't believe it... a **Hit Parader** issue without Slipknot on the cover!! What gives? While I love the Knot (and appreciate your loyal coverage of their every move) I applaud your decision to give some other worthy bands the attention they so richly deserve. Mike

**OZZFEST FALLOUT** 

Hoboken, NJ

Baltimore, MD

After attending this year's *Ozzfest*, one fact became particularly clear to me—there is a HUGE dichotomy between what I think of as being "heavy metal" (bands like Sabbath and Maiden) and what a lot of other people apparently view as metal. The younger generation of bands who performed at the show—ranging from Killswitch Engage and Trivium to Arch Enemy and As I Lay Dying—may play loud music, but they seem to do so without the blues-rooted sensibilities that always distinguished true metal. I have a major problem with that.

This year's *Ozzfest*— the tour's 10th Anniversary— was the best in the event's history. Why do I say that? Because I can! I've been to eight different *Ozzfests*, going

all the way back to 1998, and this year's featured the strongest lineup, and the most bands that really seemed stoked to be playing at the event. In the past, especially the bands that were playing early in the day, seemed to be going through the motions. Not this years. Everyone rocked!

Mary
Hartford, CT

I love Black Sabbath. Always have... always will. But two things are beginning to really bother me about them. The first is that since they're playing no material recorded after 1980, they're turning into heavy metal's equivalent of the Beach Boys— a band with no contemporary relevance that seems content to relive memories created before many of their fans were even born. In some ways that's fine because songs like *Iron Man* and *War Pigs* are truly timeless. But how great would it be if the Sabs would actually get it together long enough to record some new music. That would change the face of 21st Century heavy metal as we know it. Mark Cleveland, OH

Ozzest should be renamed Snoozefest as far as I'm concerned. There are just too many bands that don't rate given the chance to get on stage and play. I've seen more talent at local bars on a Friday night. Sure, we all know the headliners are great, but if you get there early in the day, you want to be entertained.

Quigly
Oakland, CA

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CAUGHT IN THE ACT BY DAMON LANCASTER

Thirtgs are now clearly a little different in and around the Audioslave camp. As this chart-topping unit continue to tour the world in support of their second disc, **Out of Exile**, it is clear that many of the tensions and apprehensions that marred the group's first sojourn through the rock scene back in 2003 have been replaced by an almost giddy sense of self-confidence. No longer is this quartet sidled with rumors of inner tension and impending breakup. Now all seems right in the musical universe created by Chris Cornell (vocals), Tom Morello (guitar), Brad Wilk (drums) and Tim Commorford (bass). Indeed, the hand has felt so good about themselves that a few months back they chose to be the first American rock band *ever* to perform in Cuba. And while that show was little more than a headline-grabbing diversion in the eyes of some, for these left-leaning rockers, it presented the opportunity of a lifetime.

"That show meant so much to us on so many levels," Morello said. "To be the first American band to play in Cuba is significant on so many levels. It was a great honor for us, and perhaps it showed a lot of people that underneath our lingering political differences, people everywhere respond to the same things... rock and roll included."

While their Havana stop-off may have drawn the most mainstream media attention their way, the fact is that every one of Audioslave's recent concert performances have been worthy of particular praise. Now some four months into their latest road jaunt, this platinum-coated supergroup has proven time-and-time-again why they've been hailed as one of this generation's most note-worthy hard rock attractions. And the band's on-stage skills have been continually rewarded by the legion of fans who have flocked to the clarion call issued by this quartet's rugged-yet accessible sound. But Audioslave's on-stage appeal stretches beyond the royal hard rock pedigree enjoyed by each band member, and it goes beyond the fact that this unit has become an international sensation thanks to such cross-over hits as *Like A Stone* and *Be Yourself*. Indeed, much of Audioslave's acclaim stems from the surprisingly

simple fact that they can play and sing with the best of 'em— a true rarity in these soulless rock and roll times. "I don't know if we really

"I don't know if we really represent something that different," Morello said. "I like to believe that we're holding up some of the most noble rock traditions, while in the process, adding our own twist to the proceedings. You never know how people are going to react to what you do, if you ever begin to take things for granted, that's when you're truly asking for trouble."

As these four took the stage amid the ear-splitting cries of adulation emanating

"You can feel our fans as well as hear them."

Chris Cornell: Exuding confidence and charisma.

from their frenzied following, it was easy to see that Audioslave was truly operating in the hard rock stratosphere. Tearing immediately into the heavy riffs of Set It Off, the band proceeded to roar through a blistering two hour set that left fans gasping for breath. In addition to presenting material from both Audioslave and Out of Exile, the band offered a generous amount of material from their previous units—Rage Against the Machine and Soundgarden— with the crowd eating up every note as if it was manna delivered directly from rock and roll heaven. With Morello continually wowing the crowd with his six-string histrionics and the band's rhythm section laying down a fundamental groove, the show was a non-stop thrill fest from first note to last. But it was unquestionably the charismatic, power-lunged Cornell who kept the crowd's attention riveted throughout the performance; no one present could deny his star quality.

"It's so good to be up on stage with these guys," Cornell said. "When we get up on stage there's nothing holding us back. We want to pour every ounce of

energy that we have into this music."

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10 HIT PARADER

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THE WORLD LEADER IN PICKUP TECHNOLOGY



Anger, defiance and rage are all common ingredients in a metal band's musical recipe. Often those elements are called upon in an almost random fashion to fuel the passions housed within the hard rock lexicon. But in the hands of the young, Canadian band A Perfect Murder, these saidsame ingredients are used with an at-times alarming, and at other times amazing degree of precision. Working like a razor rather than a battering ram, on their latest disc, Strength Through Vengeance, guitarist Carl Buchard, vocalist Kevin Randel, bassist Dave B., quitarist Dom Poisson and drummer Yan manage to neatly dissect countless cutting edge issues, ranging from organized religion to the pitfalls of poverty. Utilizing Randel's menacing vocals as a focal point, and splattering their attack with the kind of fleet-fingered solo work that has reminded some of vintage Metallica and Pantera, it would appear as if A Perfect Murder are about to make

their mark on a needy heavy metal scene.

"This album turned out even angrier than we may have originally intended," Randel said. "As we were recording, I'd often lock myself in a hot room, letting my anger and frustration build to a boiling point. That's when I'd burst out and do my vocal tracks. But sometimes it got to be too much for me— and for everyone else, as well. One of my vocal tracks was lost, and for most of the day I just stormed around the studio threatening to burn everyone at the stake... and I meant it!"

The members of A Perfect Murder have been

working to perfect their anger emissions ever since the band's first version got together in Montreal back in 2000. At that time the group's lineup was still in a state of major flux. Yet undeterred by their inner chaos, the group managed to record two indie albums, Blood Covered Words and Cease to Suffer, both of which scored some impressive points within the Canadian metal underground. Those initial successes led the band to sign with a larger label in 2003, and a year later they released Unbroken, an effort that opened the eyes of metal fans around the world and led directly to this unit landing tours with the likes of Bury Your Dead. But the pressures associated with major tour commitments put an additional strain on the group's

and more talented version of APM than ever before. Yet, despite all of his best efforts, one vital ingredient was missing... a vocalist. After thoroughly scouring the Canadian hard rock scene for a fitting candidate, the band expanded their search before finally finding their man, Randel, in— of all places— Nashville, Tennessee. A quickly arranged trip up to Montreal brought all the key players into contact, and before the day was out a new version of A Perfect Murder was born.

"The opportunity to join this band came at an ideal time for me," Randel said. "My previous band had just broken up, and I happened to see A Perfect Murder's want ad posted on an on-line

### "Making this album was a difficult, but rewarding experience for us."

members, and by late 2004 some major changes were inevitable.

"Everyone except Yan and myself were out," Bouchard said. "Everyone else had full-time jobs and families, and the idea of leaving those behind for the band was just too much of a risk for them. I understand. It takes a great deal of commitment to be in a band like A Perfect Murder. There isn't the promise of great wealth or great fame. It's a true labor of love."

The fresh start provided Bouchard with the chance to create a new version of A Perfect Murder— one that could better fulfill the burgeoning career opportunities now being cast at the band's feet. Slowly but surely, he drew the best local talent together, forming an angrier, heavier

metal site. I went up to Montreal to work with them and see how we'd all function together, and right away we knew we had something great going on."

Within weeks of their new-found musical marriage, this reconstituted quintet started putting together the pieces that would eventually emerge as **Strength Through Vengeance**. Drawing on their individual strengths as well as their shared passions, soon A Perfect Murder had created what they believe will be their entree into the upper echelon of heavy metal society. "The album turned out to be loud and brutal," Yan said. "We like it!"

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The rock and roll lifestyle has always served as the antithesis of General Douglas MacArthur's farnous farewell speech where he stated, "Old soldiers never die... they just fade away." Well, in the contemporary music world, rockers too often seem to die before their time, as those that manage to survive rarely fade away... they simply take some time off to reinvent themselves. Take the case of vocalist Joe LeSte. Back nearly 20 years ago, during the halcyon days of the Hair Metal revolution, LeSte fronted one of that era's most hyped bands, Bang Tango— a group that, in all honesty, never quite lived up to all their advance billing. But despite the rather harsh lessons of rock and roll life that LeSte may have learned back then, he remained undaunted when it came to fulfilling each and every one of his rock and roll dreams. Thus over the ensuing years, the still-darkly handsome frontman has become involved in a

variety of projects, none of which has excited him half as much as his current band, Beautiful Creatures

"This is a real rock and roll band," he said "We're really loud and really heavy and we make no excuses about it. The time is right for a band like Beautiful Creatures because the rock landscape has changed over the last few

years. When we first came along back in 2001, it was before bands like the Darkness or Velvet Revolver helped introduce a new generation to rock and roll. People didn't really understand what we were doing back then. Now they do."

On their latest disc, **Deuce**, which follows four years after Beautiful Creatures' self-titled debut first introduced this hard rockin' lot to the music masses, LeSte, guitarist Mark Simpson, guitarist Anthony Focx, bassist Kenny Kweens and drummer Timmy Russell have clearly gone for the metal jugular. While their latest batch of tunes— highlighted by such songs as *Brand New Day, Unforgiven* and the disc's first single, *Anyone*— are a far cry from the slick sounding stuff that characterized the '80s metal style, there's no questioning either this music's lineage, or its intent. This is rock and roll designed

# IMAGE CONCSIOUS

to bowl you over with both its power and its pugnaciousness, and LeSte simply wouldn't have it any other way.

"We went through a tough time after our first album came out," he said.
"Not only were we fighting an uphill battle in terms of the musical climate, but some of the people in the band didn't have the fortitude to stick it out. We went through some major changes over the last four years, But if anything, all of that only made me more committed to my belief in great rock and roll

As LeSte indicated, the path that Beautiful Creatures have chosen to follow

has been littered with the bodies of fallen comrades who simply didn't want to keep up the fight needed to attain their singer's goals. Indeed, it takes a special kind of guy to put up with the long hours in the studio, and the incessant touring needed to break a young band. And, make no mistake about it, the BC bunch gave it their best shot following their ini-

tial release, including a road stint with Kiss, and a potentially career-making opportunity at Ozzfest But when things didn't break exactly the way LeSte had planned, it was back to the drawing board, with virtually a new band, a new producer and a new record label. The results, as heard throughout **Deuce**, mark Beautiful Creatures as a band that means some serious rock and roll business.

"Some fans may wonder why it's been four years since our last album," LeSte said. "Well, we went through some changes, but more importantly, we wanted to make sure that every song on **Deuce** was as good as it could possibly be. We couldn't afford any "throw-away" tracks, and we wouldn't allow for any. Right now we're all totally focused on making this band become as big as it possibly can be."

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"We hope every album brings something new into the mix. On this album we approached it as we always do, trying to blend things that we knew would sound good on stage, with some things we never did before. Our goal has always been just to write and record songs that we like, and that's what we've done this time

ANGUS YOUNG, AC/DC

"We never tried to build ourselves up. But it is nice that people seem to be excited about what we're doing. Thankfully, we've all been around long enough at this point so that we have something of a following. But with that does come audience expectations. It can be hard to deal with thosebut I think we're managing to do so guite nicely.' TOM MORELLO, AUDIOSLAVE

"It's definitely different in America. But after you've seen your faces plastered on the front of both the British rock magazines and the daily papers, you try your best not to get caught up in too much of that. At some point it begins to take away from the music. It doesn't help your focus one bit.' JUSTIN HAWKINS, THE DARKNESS

"There's something about playing in a large hall that nothing else can match. The way the sound bounces off the walls, the way the crowds go crazy, there's just nothing else that can even come close. For us, part of the fun of touring is being able to go into those arenas and bring all of our fantasies alive. JONATHAN DAVIS, KORN

"Every night I can feel the love that the fans have for us- and I hope that same kind of love is transmitted back to them. I wish we had the time and the opportunity to thank each and every one of them personally, but that's impossible. Hopefully, the music, and knowing how much we appreciate them, is enough to keep them satisfied.'

TONY IOMMI, BLACK SABBATH

"It's so great to be back on the road with these guys again. When you're away from something you love, you realize how much it really means to you. The fans have been incredibly loyal to us. A lot of the media people may have given us a tough time over the years,



but the fans have always been there for usand we'll always love 'em for it." TOMMY LEE, MOTLEY CRUE

"A band like ours never became particularly enamored with the concepts of fame or fortune. Our original intent is still very much in place--- and that's to create music that touches on issues that we feel are important and then to present them in as interesting a manner as possible. But unlike the growing public perception, not every song we do has some deep inner meaning or stands behind some strident social agenda. Some of them are just good rock and roll songs." SERJ TANKIAN, SYSTEM OF A DOWN

"I find that my lyrics aren't quite as dark as they used to be, and while there's still a great deal of pain in there, I believe that having the support of my family has allowed me to begin seeing the light at the end of the tunnel." AARON LEWIS, STAIND

"This isn't an act for us, it's a true representation of the people in this band. I don't have any fear that we'll ever lose that edge. If we ever begin to lose it, then we simply won't exist any more. The musical beast that is Slipknot needs the kind of energy and attitude that we bring to it, or it will die. That could happen tomorrow, or it might never happen, you never know for sure. COREY TAYLOR, SLIPKNOT

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### SEVENDUST. NEXT

They've gone through some changes (with former Snot guitarist Sonny Mayo replacing long-time band mainstay Clint Lowery), but as shown throughout their latest disc, Next, at the end of it all, Sevendust have gone back to doing what they do best-delivering heavy, inspired rock with with passion and fury. While it may now be too late for this Atlanta-based unit to ever attain the lofty goals once many felt were their birthright, it appears that there's still plenty of time for the Dust to reestablish their stellar credentials. Here, vocalist Lajon Witherspoon roars with more conviction than he's shown in years, while the band's freshlyalligned guitar tandem rock out with both power and precision. In both the depth and bredth of of its approach, this is Sevendust's best album since their highly-acclaimed debut. RATING: \*

Sevendust. Going back to the late '90s, they were my pick for emerging as hard rock's Next Big Thing. But somewhere along the line it seemed as if this quintet lost a bit of their focus. Thankfully, they seem to have rediscovered it on **Next**, an album that not only slavages their career, but shows exactly why so many people got excited about these quys in the first place.

RATING: \*

### **IOMMI/HUGHES.** FUSION

Tony lommi is a legend thanks to more than 35 years of work with Black Sabbath. Glenn Hughes is a highly respected bassist/vocalist perhaps best known for his stint with the so-called Mk. III version of Deep Purple. Together, they have recorded **Fusion** (actually, their second album as a team—the first being recorded nearly a decade ago) which shows that these metal veterans still have what it takes to deliver the wall-shaking goods. While this may not rank up there with classic Sabbath albums, there's no question that it's nice to hear lommi work with a talented vocalist again—especially after enduring the lost-my-voice screeching that Ozzy put forth last summer.

Okay, let's stop fooling around. Tony lommi wants to make a new Black Sabbath album. We all want him to make a new Black Sabbath album. So no matter how interesting his "side projects" may be, they're all totally irrelevent until he actually gets to make that new Sabbath album. But, come to think of it, **Fusion** will actually do quite nicely until that new Sabbath album is recorded... if it ever is. RATING: \*\*\*\*

## A DIFFERENT KIND OF PAIN

Cold is one of those bands that's hard not to like. But at the same time, because of the nature of their unintenionally blend-in look, sound and style it's difficult to believe that vocalist Scooter Ward and his boys will ever become more than "special guest" rock and roll attractions. But with all that in



# e Indies

Not many bands can rebound from being dropped from the major label system. But not many bands out there have the calcium fortified backbone and unassailable will power of California's Project 86. P86 have bounced back from a rocky past couple of years with ...And The Rest Will Follow, an

album that sonically and emotionally resembles 2000's **Drawing Black** Lines, their best, most cohesive effort. Songs like Sincerely, Ichabod, which has a chunky, guitar line that reminded us of Meshuggah, and My Will Be A Dead Man are as nimble and well-thought out as they are blustery and intense. Smart, catchphrase filled lyrics and the gritty production also make ... And The Rest Will Follow a member of an elite class of records in 2005 that will mark many fans and critics top ten lists.

FOR FANS OF: Eugazi Spancase Deftones

# ED GEIN We Are All Judas Goats (Black Market Activities)

The real Ed Gein has inspired some of the goriest

frightfests (The Silence Of The Lambs, The Texas Chainsaw

Massacre)ever to grace the silver screen. The serial killing cannibal has influenced this modern noise-metal band enough for them to take his name. We Are All Judas Goats is the sound of teeth-

gnashing, women

screaming, and livestock being slaughtered...it's the sound of chaos, heavy-metal style. If serial murderers and gnarly, angry metal make your stomach queasy, then sit this ride out. If you have a taste for the musically insane, then Ed Gein's got you covered with We Are All Judas Goats.

FOR FANS OF: Deadquy, From A Second Story STARS:

A doppelganger, for those of you without a dictionary, is your double or someone who looks

a helluva lot like you. The Fall Of Troy are a doppelganger for bands like Thursday and At The Drive-In. That's because TFOT manufacture messy, post-hardcore mayhem on Doppelganger, their EVR debut. Harmonic distortion, twisting and turning guitar riffs,

and alternately sung and screamed vocal lines are the order of the day on this supercharged Doppelganger. The album is sloppy, but we mean good sloppy. It's all over the place, barely stops to catch its breath, and picks up the pieces that At The Drive-In left in their wake.

FOR FANS OF: At The Drivein: Flursday, College And Combres

# nd Of Blood (Trustkill)

Bullet For My Valentine are huge over in their native England, and thanks to Trustkill Records, the hard rock community stateside can get a taste of what all the freaking fuss is about. Hand Of Blood is a 6-song, guitar driven EP that isn't afraid to reveal its melodic side. Bullet For My Valentine may wear allblack and sport ink-hued mops of hair, but they're not gothic or trendy and their look isn't what will attract people to them. It's the guitarwork on 4 Word (To Choke Upon) and

Hand Of Blood that the kids'll sink their teeth into.

FOR FANS OF: Trivium, From STARS:

# DISSONANCE

Everything about Ion Dissonance's **Solace** is high velocity, high voltage, and high concept. While they

are just one in a long line of fire breathing bands that don't like to stop for a brief rest, there's something about Solace's chafing noise that's more palpable than most bands that reside under the same umbrella as lon Dissonance. Don't get us wrong. Most of the album is about as pleasant as raking an acidsoaked emery board over exposed nerves in the roots of your teeth. But the album is played and produced tightly, so much that it never gets on your last nerves. Yes, your parents and neighbors will ask you to turn this down. But you'll still turn it louder, and not just to be contrary.

FOR FANS OF: Premonitions Of War



# The Indies

FLYLEAF Flyleaf (Octone)

We're going to lay the Flyleaf cards face up on the table right now. Flyleaf is fronted by easy-on-theeyes frontwoman Lacey Mosely. Ms. Mosley is talented. Her honey tongued vocals hold their own against the guitar din and racket created by her bandmates. She also goes a few levels lower and deeper with her grunts, but it's her sweet, almost saccharine delivery that's most appealing on I'm So Sick and Breathe Today. Flyleaf is full of rock radio moments in the songwriting, but it's Ms. Mosley that keeps things afloat with her buoyant, bellowing pipes.

FOR FANS OF: mellower Kittie songs, heavier Evanescence songs STARS: \*\*

### TURBONEGRO Party Animals (Abacus

KISS may have said they wanna rock and roll all night and party every day, but Turbonegro carry out those marching orders to a T. Turbonegro embody all things hedonistic, blasphemous, and sextracirricular. These Norwegians never shrink away from having a good time, and Party Animals, their seventh album, is typical Turbonegro. Decadent, loud, in your face, with more debauchery than a frat house. Armed with glammy, rolling riffs and some solos, Turbonegro turn the amps up to 11 and set the couches on fire with All My Friends Are Dead and Blow Me (Like The Wind).

FOR FANS OF: The Hellacopters, Butthole Surfers, Backyard Bables STARS: \*\*\*

## HORSE THE BAND The Mechanical Hand

(Combat

Listening to Horse
The Band is like listening to a Nintendo soundtrack. There are plenty of blips and beeps, often uncommon in extremely heavy music. There's so much going on in a single song on The

Mechanical Hand that you'll feel like you are listening to a commercial jingle, a video game, a movie score, and a metal band....all at once. The keyboards on The Mechanical Hand give the music a slightly relaxing charm. So rather than jumping off a bridge to escape the chaos, you'll embrace it. The kids that comprise Horse The Band are known for being a bunch of whacky smart asses, and from the sounds of A Million Exploding Suns and Birdo, you'll realize that you have to be smarter and more sarcastic than the average person to make and to get this music.

FOR FANS OF: Dillinger Escape Plan, The Blood Brothers, Every Time I Die STARS: \*\*\*

# PATHS OF POSSESSION Promises In Blood

(Melai Blade)

Paths Of Possession are a new band featuring George "Corpsegrinder" Fisher of Cannibal Corpse on vocals. Hold up, hold on. Don't go assuming that this Paths Of Possession are another groovy, Cookie Monster death metal band. Musically, **Promises in Blood** is slightly proggy, mid-tempo metal, and Fisher doesn't use the same guttural growi that he abuses in his day job in Cannibal Corpse. He doesn't write as gorily and graphically here, either. He definitely screams and he barks, but it's with much less bite, intentionally so. Death metal growls would not fit this type of music, which is particularly riff driven. Stand out cuts are *Darklands* and *Bleed The Meek*.

FOR FANS OF: Camibal Corpse. Nevermore STARS: \*\*\*\*

## CURL UP AND DIE The End Of All That Is

(Revelation

In the metalcore scene, there are plenty of hipsters, and Curl Up And Die are one of those bands that the hipsters lay claim to. That is by no means a discredit to Curl Up And Die or their music. On The End Of All That Is, they've reeled the reigns in a bit and aren't spastic-for-the-sake-of-being spastic. The album has a darker, almost melancholic cast, namely in album opener An Uncomfortable Routine, which showcases the band's talent and craft, as opposed to skill. The album has full songs as well as less than a minute bursts all sandwiched between longer songs. All this makes for some exciting ebb and flow throughout.

FOR FANS OF: Since By Man, Drowningman STARS: \*\*

# BECOMING THE ARCHETYPE Terminate Damnation

(Solid State

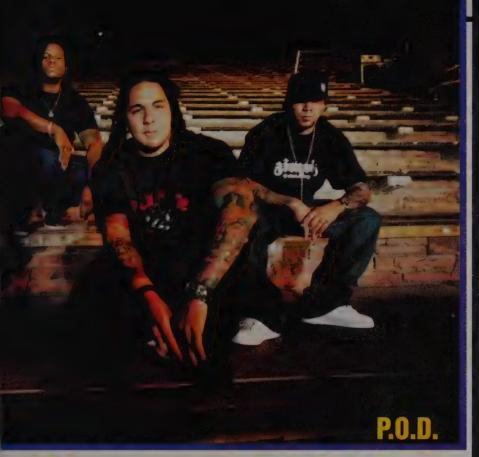
Get out your moshing shoes, because
Becoming The Archetype's debut, Terminate
Damnation, has just graduated from the As I
Lay Dying/Unearth school of the mosh. This album
is overflowing with breakdowns, and lyrical barking that's more intimidating than a pitbull on
steroids. But Terminate Damnation isn't just about
singular rage. While that's what most of the album
is about, there are lots of mellow, textured passages on the record, like 2 minutes, 25 seconds
into Into Oblivion. It's here where Becoming The
Archetype pay homage to technical Swedish metal
bands. A surprising, well-done debut!

FOR FANS OF: As I Lay Dying, Living Sacrifice. Unearth STARS: \*\*\*



mind, it's impossible to not get swept up in the pathos that fills the band's new disc, **A Different Kind of Pain**. Indeed, in sharp contrast to a lot of bands who put on their "woe us us" masks whenever it's time to play some music, these guys actually seem to be living in a personal hell of their own design. Sometimes such negativity is a tad too pervasive, and begins to bring the music— as well as the listenee— down. But when it works (which, thankfully, is most of the time) there's an inherent majesty to Cold's approach that is electric. RATING: \*\*\*\*

The old blues song says, "If I didn't have bad luck... I'd have no luck at all." That seems to be the credo by which Cold live by. Every song featured on the group's latest release, A Different Kind of Pain, is so embued with an almost neurotic degree of bad luck that you almost want to grab a four-leaf clover while listening to it. Yet, if you're one of those down-at-the-mouth types, hearing the chaos that seemingly controls this group's day-to-day existence is enough to almost put a smile on your face.



### P.O.D., Teshtiey

Just a few short years ago, P.O.D. seemed to have it all going their way. They were sitting atop the charts with **Satellite**, and they were the darlings of the media for their uplifting, street-savvy rap/metal

sound. But then guitarist Marcos left, and the band took a bit of a misstep with their next album, Payable on **Death**. Now they're trying to recapture some of their former glory on Testify, with notably mixed results. The band's surprisingly spiritual, yet eminently heavy sound is still very much in place. But for whatever reason the magical, mystical musical reactants that first won this Southtown unit fame and fortune has been severely watered down along the way. RATING:

I've always thought P.O.D. was one of the more "real" bands in hard rock. There was a minmum of pretension (aside from their cloaked religious messages), and a maximum of real-deal street cred from these San Diego rockers. But **Testify** isn't the best album this band has done basically because the softer, more commercial stuff doesn't match up to material found on the unit's earlier discs. But when they crank it up and rock out, P.O.D. still stand as one of the best bands around. RATING: \*\*\*\*

### TAPROOT, BLUE-SKY RESERARCH

Taproot have always been hard to classify... but rather easy to enjoy. That is the exact same

formula that this band presents on their new disc, Blue-Sky Research, where highly accessible melodies crash head-on with furious metal-styled riffing to present a somewhat schizo-phrenic, yet surprisingly satisfying result. Featuring no less than three songs the band wrote with former Smashing

Pumpkins leader Billy Corgan, this album marks Taproot's emergence into the hard rock big leagues. Now what should be fascinating is to see if they can take the foothold that they've been provided to exert a true presence on rock's upper echelon.

RATING: \*\*\*\*\*

I've never been a particular fan of Taproot's. I've always found the band's musical dichotomy more annoying than pleasing, and that's a fact that holds true on **Blue-Sky Research** as well. Neither heavy enough to be true "metal" or melodic enough to be actual "pop", Taproot seems to enjoy standing in a musical neterworld where being neither fish nor fowl is a credit to be savored. Well, not in my book! RATING: \*\*\*

# Quick Benieus

STATIC-X, START A WAR RATING: \*\*\*\*

ROBERT PLANT, MIGHTY REARRANGER RATING: \*\*\*\*\*

STAIND, CHAPTER V RATING: \*\*\*

DREDG, CATCH WITHOUT ARMS RATING: \*\*\*

SYSTEM OF A DOWN, HYPNOTIZE RATING: \*\*\*\*

NINE INCH NAILS, WITH TEETH RATING: \*\*\*\*\*

AUDIOSLAVE, OUT OF EXILE RATING: \*\*\*\*

DARK NEW DAY, TWELVE YEAR SILENCE RATING: \*\*\*\*

SEETHER, KARMA & EFFECT RATING:\*\*\*

DEF LEPPARD, ROCK OF AGES RATING:\*\*\*

JUDAS PRIEST, ANGEL OF RETRIBUTION RATING: \*\*\*\*

MUDVAYNE, LOST AND FOUND RATING: \*\*\*

OZZY
OSBOURNE,
Prince Of
Darkness
RATING: \*\*\*\*

MOTLEY CRUE, RED, WHITE & CRUE RATING: \*\*\*\*













## HEAVY METAL HAPPENINGS

KORN: Korn have made good their promise to make music "history" with their next label deal. The band has signed what is for all intents and purposes a "partnership" deal with Virgin Records (home to the Rolling Stones and Janet Jackson, among others) where the label will share in the band's merchandising and tour revenues, and a band will share in the label's corporate profits. Perhaps the only other band to succeed in landing such a juicy deal with their label is Metallica, who basically went on "strike" a decade ago until a new deal was offered that allowed them a much greater stake in profits derived from their efforts. "This is what we were looking for," said vocalist Jonathan Davis. "We needed to do something that was really different."



IRON MAIDEN: The dust still hasn't completely settled around the on-stage Ozzfest battle that erupted back in August between Iron Maiden's Bruce Dickinson and forces from the Black Sabbath camp (spurred on by that "iron maiden" herself, Sharon Osbourne.) It seems as if Sharon believed that Dickinson had disparaged Ozzy—as well as the entire fest—in a variety of interviews. Her response? To have associates pelt Dickinson with eggs while the singer performed during Maiden's last night on the summer-long run. Since then names have been called, and no one seems willing to leave well enough

alone. It's a *very* safe bet that we'll not soon see Maiden and Sabbath listed on the same marguee.

**DISTURBED:** Following the chart-topping arrival of their third disc, **Ten Thousand Fists**, Disturbed's David Draiman admits that there's more pressure than ever on his best-selling band. "You know, in this business, no matter what you may accomplish, there's always so much more to do," the singer said. "We've sold over five million copies of our albums, yet there's still very much a 'well, what have you done lately?' attitude out there. It can be very frustrating if you let it be."

DROWNING POOL: It's now official, former Soil vocalist Ryan McCombs has joined Drowning Pool, replacing "Gong" Jones... who lasted just one album and tour after replacing the late Dave Williams. Conflict has erupted between McCombs and his former Soil bandmates because the singer had asked to leave that band so that he could spend more time with his family. Just a few months later, he joined Drowning Pool. "This is an amazing opportunity for me," McCombs said. "I'm sorry if there are some ruffled feathers, but that's just the way it goes."

SLIPKNOT: Be careful where you wear your old Halloween masks... someone from Slipknot may be watching. That must be the feeling of the people at fast food giant Burger King after Slipknot threatened to sue them after seeing BK's recent "Coq Roq" commercials, where a wild 'n crazy heavy metal band can be seen sporting a variety of rather bizarre chicken masks. Apparently the Knot felt that the image tread a little too closely to their Shock Rock turf, so they had their legal advisors crank out a quick "cease and desist" note to the Burger King folks. It should be fascinating to see how this one turns out!

DARKNESS: While they won't come right out and say it, there are some within that Darkness camp who openly wonder if the band is on the right track. Vocalist/guitarist Justin Hawkins and the boys certainly took their time completing their second album and (after parting ways with original bassist Frankie Poullain—since replaced by Richie Edwards) have been very particular about the tour dates they've accepted. What's going on? "Nothing's going on," Justin said. "We're taking our time and doing this right. If some people have trouble accepting that, it's their problem, not ours."

### VICTORY RECORDS PRESENTS:



THE HOTTEST NEWS. THE HOTTEST NEW

BLACK SABBATH: Rumors continue to swirl regarding the imminent intentions of Black Sabbath. Following their controversial run at last summer's Ozzfest (where the band had to cancel a number of performances due to what was widely reported as Ozzy's "allergies"), both guitarist Tony lommi and bassist Geezer Butler took a break in order to focus on their separate, recently



released solo discs. But talk of a new Sabbath album has again started to heat up, with Ozzy and wife/manager Sharon warming up to the idea. "Yes, there's been more serious talk about it than there's been in years," lommi said. "But not only do we all need to get on the same page, but if we do then we first have to make a brilliant album."

MASTODON: Following their crowd-pleasing summer concert dates, heavy metal upstarts Mastodon plan to soon enter the recording studio to begin recording their debut major label disc. The acclaim heaped upon their 2005 indie disc, Leviathan, brought the majors to this Atlantabased band's door, and now they're primed and ready to step up to the Big Time. "This is what we've been waiting for," said bassist/vocalist Troy Saunders. "A band like ours—that plays a very uncompromising brand of metal, isn't always sure if they'll get that major label chance. But now that we've got it, we plan to make the most of it."

SYSTEM OF A DOWN: Few bands in the rock world draw a more diverse audience than System of a Down. Metal-heads stand along side businessmen and flower children in the band's crowd, all grooving to the diverse, intense music that this L.A.-based unit produces. "That's one of my greatest pleasures," said vocalist Serj Tankian. "To look out and see so many different types of people all seemingly enjoying themselves. We don't like to have our music classified, and it appears as if our audience doesn't want to be classified as well. Everyone is welcome at one of our shows."

JUDAS PRIEST: There is still debate raging within Judas Priest as to how long the band will stay on the road following the release of their latest disc, Angel of Retribution. Original plans dictated that the legendary metal unit would undertake a North American arena tour in the winter of 2006, but that may be pushed back to the spring, with additional European and Oriental dates taking their place... but things could still change at a moment's notice. "We're keeping things quite flexible," said vocalist Rob Halford. "Basically we're letting demand dictate where we go."

## BREAKING NEWS BY LOU O'NEILL, JR

ON DEADLINE: SO MUCH TO say, so little space. But first: Whither Slipknot? The live album capturing the band's intense sound is already out, the tour has basically concluded so, where do the guys go from here? We saw the band in Jersey with Lamb of God and Shadows Fall and the sound was unbelievable! Not soft and soothing, but UNBELIEV-ABLE. The magic Corey Taylor and Crew really managed to capture their "live" sound on this record.

Nevertheless, we query, where does Slipknot go from here? Our embedded mole, "Mustard Sauce, put it this way, "The thing here is pretty simple. Everyone in the band knows another Stone Sour is sure to develop. What does that mean to Slipknot—the band that just created magic? And that's not even including the inevitable reformation of MURDERDOLLS. The key, is like, o.k. man, whatever you do on the side is cool, but let's not let the real Slipknot fall apart." Hmmm!

COMMENT: A tip of the hat Mr. Mustard—flavor we ask not—yet happen to think you're 100% right. What was it the last time with side projects and all? Close to three years, We'll go on record and state that any band that could have created "Before I Forget" has an awful lot of talent and should never let it slip away! More on SK as it develops! Flash: As we go to press, Hit Parader can confirm that Corey Taylor and Jim Root will be entering the studio next month to record the second Stone Sour CD. Snoops tell us that 30 songs have already been written and that the selection process is ongoing. What does this mean to Slipknot???

SECRET STUFF: That metal singer from jolly olde England even had his jaded Hamptons' neighbors abuzz! The dude was so blitzed that he didn't even realize he tore off the fender of his Benz when he left the soiree. His attitude: It's only money. Gent was lucky this time. Please we can say no more.

OUICKIE QUIZ: If our thought is on target, last month we asked you which letter of the alphabet took up the least space in Webster's? Correct Ans.; "Q" as in Quincy. Let's stick with letters and words again this month. There is only one state out of 50 that starts with two consecutive vowels. Name it! And you butt out Corey Taylor!!!

NO NAMES PLEEZE: A famous metal guitarist, known as a heartbreaker, is no dummy. So when his father went on one of those reality things and told the world how proud he was that his boy stopped using—he went nuts! The phlegmatic musician went ultra-whack-a-ding-hoy and demolished the entire hotel suite. It was supposed to be a secret. Crazy world, ain't it!

ROCK WIRE REPORT: SEVENDUST is leading us to the future. Their new deal with 7 Bros. Records should be used as a model for legal deals to come. Why shouldn't it be a true partnership with the label? What WineDark Records, with Universal watching Its back, realizes is that the industry has and is constantly revolving and, if you don't adapt, you'll die. It's that simple. Mike Powlen and his team put the whole thing together...Hey, how can we forget the third of December...no matter what year it is. For it was on that date in 1948 a stern-looking babe.

named John Osbourne entered this world. And the planets have never been the same since. Seriously, thanks for the ride Ozzy and many more to come. A wacky fan is following the Stones tour night after night and pulling out a sign right in the audience proclaiming, ("I Can't Get No) Metamucil." Snoops sniff Keith does NOT think it's funny...

We could have asked you this for our monthly quiz. How well are cell fones selling? Well, cells have surpassed land lines for the first time in history! They

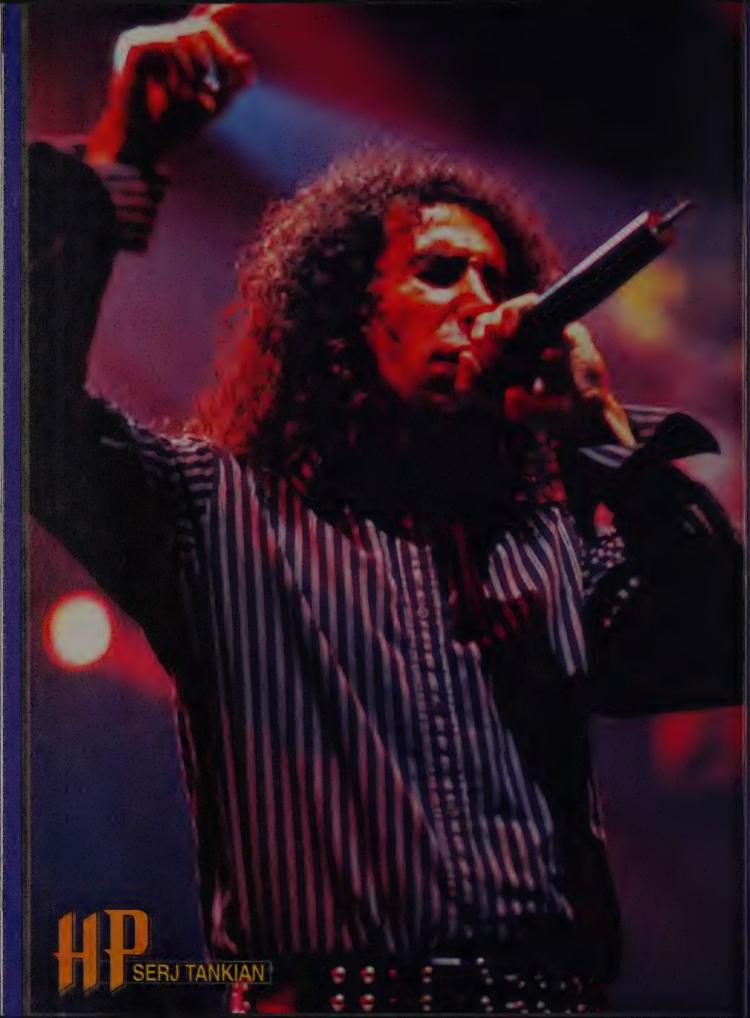


#### Slipknor: New live CD is Unbelievable

are up 15% in one year alone and closing in on 200 million lines. It's only 20 years since the cell-phone became available. ... Is it just us or how is it going to work with Paul Rodgers and Queen? Sure we loved "All Right Now," the band. Free, not to mention Bad Company. That said... when you get right down to the real deal—there was only ONE FREDDIE MER-CURY! After Gotham we'll update. .. Mia Tyler and Papa Roach drummer Dave Buckner agreed it wasn't working and are getting a divorce. . Freaky! This wild Australian rocker has parties where everyone is locked in a steel room! Someone please explain this. You cannot leave till he lets you! Where's he coming from? Phew.

OVER 'N' OUT: Mick Mars and the rest of the Crue were so gratified that Keith and Mick asked them to open two West Coast gigs. You gotta' give the Crue an "A" for an amazing comeback. Personal to Mick Mars: Hang in there buddy with your back problems. Mick you still got those chops down cold. "Too Fast For Love" proved it to these ancient ears. . Could Bruce Springsteen be ready to walk away from his labels of 33 years. Columbia? Just asking!!!.. What can one say about the Sharon Osbourne/Iron Maiden mess? No. we don't think it was right when Sharon shut their sound down, but fair is fair. Sharon and Ozzy did pay Maiden a \$185.000 a night to rock to some of their biggest audiences ever. Hey, it's very simple... You don't mess around with Ozzy's wife, She's been around the track. Maybe we're crazy, but it seems Maiden should be thanking Sharon.

SEE YOU NEXT YEAR. Until then, remember: It's hard to believe that 2005 came and went in a blink of the eye. Still, we wish all our readers everywhere a healthy, happy and prosperous 2006. Keep on rockin and peace! And God bless the United States of America, too!



ezmerize has emerged as a multi-platinum selfing smash. Their world-tour has proven to be a sold-out phenomenon. Their every utterance has drawn intense media scrutiny from scribes around the globe. So what can System of a Down possibly do for an encore? They can

release Hypnotize, that's what,

The companion-piece collection to their mezmerizing spring disc. Hypnotize adds yet another glowing chapter to the musical tome being written by vocalist Serj Tankian, bassist Shavo Odadjian, gultarist Daron Malakian and drummer John Dolmayan, Indeed, this isn't a follow-up to Mezmerize, but rather an extension of that disc, featuring material recorded at the same time, in the same place, and with the same degree of artistic elan. But rather than being viewed as nothing more than a "Bsides" set, as SOAD's 2001 release, Steal This Album regrettably became, fans everywhere realize that the Mezmerize/Hypnotize package was always designed to be two pieces of the same puzzle-together forming one of the most overwhelming musical sets in rock and roll history.

There's a very simple reason that we decided to break these albums into two separate releases," Malakian said: "We had so many good songs that we wanted to put out, and this was the most logical way to do it. We had hundreds of songs that I had written over the last few years, so getting down to the 24 tracks that made it onto these two albums was very difficult. Taking it down any further was impossible. Two albums became almost a minimum for us. We probably could have done three or four

without sacrificing any quality

"But we also wanted to make sure that no one viewed the material on **Hypnotize** as anything but the best we could provide One of the things we learned with **Steal This Album** was that a lot of people incorrectly viewed that material as 'leftovers'. That wasn't true at all. So this time, when we again discovered that we were going to have more material than we could possibly place on a single album, the decision was made by all of us to come up with a better solution-and releasing two separate albums was that solution.

And what a brilliant solution that has already proven to be. With sales for Mesmerize already past the three million unit mark, and advance orders for Hypnotize indicating that System's new disc will be every bit as successful, the band's move to break their massive set into two separate discs has provided both a commercial and artistic bonanza. Of course, there are those who will view the move to release two separate full-price discs as little more than a corporate money grab by both the band and their label. But as anyone who understands the System of a Down dynamic will tell you, nothing could be further from

This was done for the express purpose of not overwhelming the fans with new music," Tankian said, "You just can't hope to release almost 30 new songs at one time and expect them to put some restraints on our own creativity! I believe that we could

just keep going and going in the studio because Daron is never at a loss for new songs and we tend to enjoy the creative process very much. But there reaches a point—perhaps one created artificially by a record label request or by a touring schedule— where you sense you need to wrap things up and turn the page. That's not always an easy moment for us... which is why we have taken so long between albums. People often ask why we take four years between album releases. Well, the answer is that we probably could take even more time if we were allowed to.

Despite the lengthy amount of time that has separated each of the band's discs (1998's System of a Down, 2001's Toxicity and now the Mezmerize/Hypnotize tandem), nothing has seemingly diminished this unit's impact on the hard rock world. Perhaps no other band of the last decade has exhibited such a unique ability to continually reinvent themselves and then instantly jump back into the upper echelon of chart success. Trends may come and go, bands may rise and fall, entire musical movements may make their momentary impression upon the rock and roll scene, yet System of a Down seems to supersede it all. It's a fact that brings a warm smile of satisfaction to the faces of these dedicated, socially aware rockers.

"That the fans seem to so easily relate to what we're doing is the ultimate reward," Tankian said, "We're all nervous before an album comes out because you think that you may have taken too much time and that the music scene has moved on. But we can't change the way we work- it's just who we are. We're not looking for perfection... we are human. But we are looking to create something that has magic. When you're dealing with the sheer volume of material that we do, it's necessary to edit yourself and try and select what you think is best for a song. Then you bring it before the entire band, and if they all agree on what you think is

best, then we all proceed.

While both Mezmerize and Hypnotize have each already proven to be among the year's most successful releases, their appearance has not come without a degree of controversyespecially from some of System of a Down's more radical, politically active supporters. Whenever a band that has championed so many important causes releases a new album, there are many who look deep into the music to discover new political messages and uncover overt left-wing rhetoric. In the case of these discs. however, often it seems that there is more intentional humor at work than carefully contrived political diatribes. And though Tankian and his bandmates can understand "concern" that they may have abandoned some of their more overt social stances. they insist that their hearts are still very much in the firing line.

You can't express everything you want on an album," the singer said. "Music, like life, is an ever-changing medium, and we need to possess the flexibility to respond to its demands. There are many issues that are so important to us. They change almost every day. Our beliefs are in there, just as they always are But we've never tried to hit you over the head with everything we believe. It's mixed in there with material that has no political agenda at all.

had hundreds songs that had written over years."

# BY WILLIAM BARNE STOP AND GO ts been three long years since STOP AND GO

Disturbed released a new album. During that time vocalist David Draiman, guitarist Dan Donnegan and drummer Mike Wengren have watched and waited as the hard rock scene has gone through a period of transition... and Disturbed itself has also gone through some changes, as well. Yes, it has been a while since the band's first two releases, The Sickness and Believe. first catapulted this explosive unit to the apex of rock and roll fame and cemented their place atop the "new metal" pecking order. But in late 2005, as their latest offering, Ten Thousand Fists, continues to prove its metal mettle, it is clear that Disturbed have returned to the rock scene with both a vengeance and a well-designed plan of attack. With new bassist John Moyer in tow, this powerpacked unit has launched one of their most ambitious touring campaigns yet—one that will see them cover the face of Planet Earth over the next 18 months. Recently we sat down with the fascinating Mr. Draiman to gain an insider's perspective on the music and musings of Disturbed.

energy and passion that we wanted. We decided to include 14 tracks on the final album— which is two more than we've ever done before. There were things that were familiar— like the return of the staccato singing style that I first utilized on **The Sickness**— and there were new elements, perhaps most notably Dan's willingness to inject guitar solos into many of the songs. **HP**: You use the word "willingness" in regard to Dan's decision to feature solos. Why? **DD**: Because it's something that we've been trying to get him to do for a long time. He

DD: Because it's something that we've been trying to get him to do for a long time. He was somewhat resistant for whatever reason. But this time he finally felt comfortable doing it, and it's injected the music with an incredible degree of excitement.

**HP**: But by their very nature aren't guitar solos very "old school"?

DD: And that's fine with is. We never understood all that talk about us being a New Metal band. Our influences were always all the classic metal bands. That's where our roots are, and will always be. But this time around I don't think you could even limit us by placing an "old" metal or "new" metal tag on us. Over the last few years metal has gone in a different direction from

and this time we were going back and forth between a number of candidates before we had the final selection. That is a featured track on the album, and it conveys such a strong visual image.

HP: How did Disturbed hook up with renowned comic artist Todd MacFarlan did the album cover?

DD: I had been a fan of his for many years. I loved his work with the Spawn comic series, and a lot of his other work, as well. So when the time came for a cover, I contacted Todd, who requested to hear some of the new music. Evidently he liked what he heard because he agreed to do the cover, and as everyone has now seen, he's done a remarkable job. We were looking for something on a grand scale, and he certainly delivered that.

DD: We feel that he has to earn his spot. It's that simple. We've all put our sweat and tears into this band for a long time. It's too easy just to hand someone a position like that. He's doing great, but he's got to keep

HP: As you look ahead when are the band

"Everything about this album as very organic."

Hit Parader: It's been three years since Believe. Was there ever a concern that your audience had grown up and moved on to other things?

David Draiman: If someone is honest, I think there's always that fear. When you're dealing with an audience like ours, which is predominately made up of young people, three years can represent a big fraction of their lives. They can move from being kids to young adults in that period... or they can go from college to having jobs and families. But I believe that the strength of our music is that it isn't limited by age, or by anything else. If you enjoyed Disturbed when you were 15, 18 or 25 then we feel quite confident that you can still enjoy our music today.

HP: In some ways **Ten Thousand Fists** sounds like the synthesis of your first two discs. Was that the result of a conscious effort on your part?

**DD:** Actually, it was all very organic, there was never a methodical attempt to introduce familiar elements from the previous albums into this music. We just started writing, and ended up with 19 songs that captured all the

what I grew up listening to. I don't think we fit in with that, no matter how heavy this album may be.

**HP:** Was **Ten Thousand Fists** an easier or more difficult album to construct than your previous two?

DD: They're *never* easy, that I can assure you. It's always a very labor-intensive, and at time tedious procedure to make sure that these songs come out just the way we want them to. But I'd have to say that more work went into this one than either of the other two. As an example, the song writing for Believe lasted for about 5 months. For this one, it went on for almost a year. We try to leave as little to chance as possible while being able to maintain the feeling of spontaneity that's so important to the music.

HP: What came first, the song 10,000 Fists, or the album title?

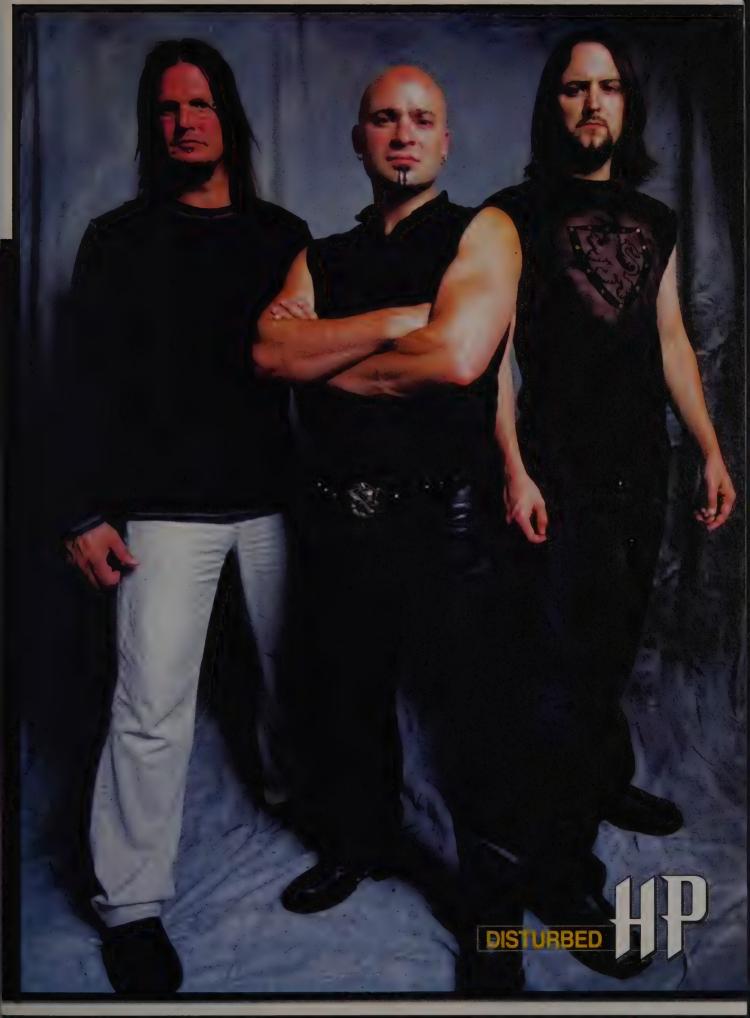
**DD:** With us, it's always the song. We like to title our albums after a song on the album,

DD; It's going to be a very busy time for us. Here's a quick rundown: We did a quick six week tour right before the album came out. Then we went over to Europe for a brief period. Then in the fall

for a brief period. Then in the fall we began the Jagermeister tour. After that it'll be on the Japan, and then by next summer we'll think about launching the next Music As A Weapon tour. But it's still a bit too early to speculate about that.

**HP:** Is Disturbed a world-wide phenomeno at this point?

DD: Actually, we have a lot of work ahead of us in that regard. When you consider that we've sold over 5 million albums so far. 4 million of those have been in the U.S. We're very thankful for that, but we want to expand our audience around the rest of the world. We've had great responses in places like the U.K., Germany and New Zealand. But we know we have to focus more on the world markets if we hope to achieve a major breakthrough. Since we also want to keep focusing on the American audience, we realize we're gonna be on the road for a long, long time. But since we love this music so much, that's absolutely fine with us.





"You need to tinker with your basic structure every now and then."

BY ROB ANDREWS

he members of Staind are quite aware that late 2005 is a very different time in rock and roll life. It isn't 1997 when their break-out disc, Tormented, first shot this Massachusetts-based unit to the apex of hard rock society. Nor is it 1999 when that album's follow-up, Dysfunction added even more luster to this down-at-themouth band's musical pedigree. It's not even 2001 when this quartet's next disc, Break the Cycle cemented their rep as one of the single most significant and successful bands of the then-still-burgeoning New Metal revolution.

No, late 2005 does indeed present a very different rock and roll landscape to vocalist Aaron Lewis, guitarist Mike Mushok, bassist Johnny April and drummer Jon Wysocki. But with the release of their latest disc, Chapter V, it would seem as if the Staind patrol are morethan ready for the challenge of standing up to the ever-shifting tides of rock and roll fate. Coming as it does two years after the unit's previous release, 2003's 14 Shades of Grey, Staind are will aware that the appearance of their latest album comes at a critical moment in their career... and they couldn't be more confident about it.

"It is a new chapter for us in many ways," said guitarist Mike Mushok. "This is our fifth album— as the title tells you— but in many ways it's something quite different and exciting for this band. We've thankfully enjoyed a lot of success with what we do, but you need to tinker with the basic structure every now and then. You can't stay creative if you don't always push yourself."

By "tinkering" with their time-tested formula of blending razor-edged rockers with more plaintive acoustic ballads, on **Chapter V** Staind has once again managed to create an album noteworthy for both its diversity and depth. As shown on such songs as *Right Here* and *Falling*, this is an album on which every song—in fact, every *note* of every song— has been carefully planned, deliberated and executed. The resulting musical melange stands as a fitting testament to this band's inherent skills. **Chapter V** may well be Staind's most thought-provoking and uniformly brilliant album to date... though the group's members sensed that they needed to create something special merely to tread water on today's rock and roll scene.

"You just can't rest on you past laurels," Mushok said. "When you do that you end up sinking, and sinking fast. Things change so quickly. We know that. We'd love to think that everyone who loved **Tormented** and **Dysfunction** would instantly go to buy this album. But we know that probably won't be the case. We have to win them over again— and do it against competition like System of a Down, Nine Inch Nails and Audioslave. But to tell you the truth, we welcome the challenge. It's nice to have the album coming out at a time when rock is perceived to be strong again."

It would indeed seem as if the Staind boys are looking forward to the myriad challenges and conflicts that will surely arise in the wake of **Chapter V**'s release. They almost seem to be *enjoying* their current state in the rock and roll kingdom. But, as this platinum-covered band's

legion of tans know all-too-well, the concept of "enjoyment" is not one that comes naturally to Staind. They're often far more at home within the bounds presented by the toil, torment, turmoil and trouble that seem to perpetually cloud their artistic souls.

their artistic souls.

It is that swirling vortex of internal emotion that has propelled each of the band's previous albums to the apex of chart success, in the process making this foursome one of hard rock's most prolific success stories. You might even think that all the commercial and critical kidos that Staind have gathered over the last half decade would be enough to lift their lingering veil of pain and suffering. But white even the always-morose Lewis admits that he's now "more content" with his lot in file, thanks to the on-going support supplied by his wife and two young children, it seems that certain "basics" of the Staind musical ethic will never change.

the Staind musical ethic will never change.

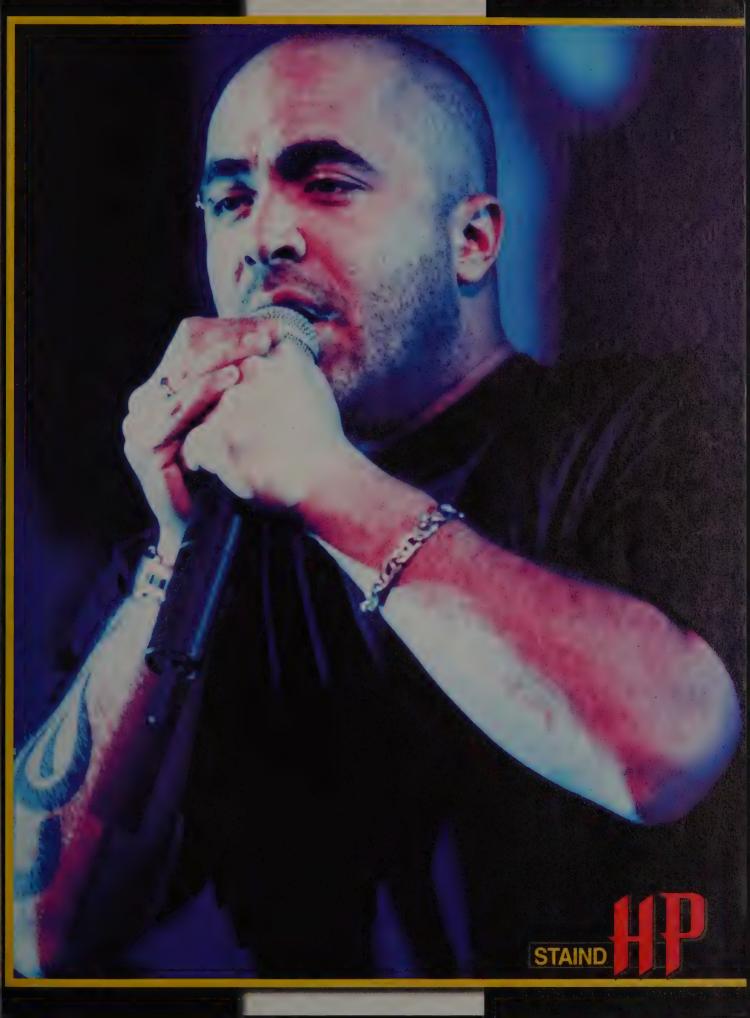
Each time we go into the studio it has to represent the next step for us." Lewis said. "I almost said it was the 'obvious' next step, but I don't think anything about our music is particularly obvious. What's interesting—at least to me—is that in many ways we're the same people we were when we made the last few albums, but in other ways we're very different people. We can't deny the success we've had, or the attention we've gotten. But at the same time, it really hasn't impacted our creative life to any great extent. What made Staind reach a responsive chord within our fans is still almost exactly where it's always been."

Lewis is well aware that reaching that "responsive chord" is far from an easy task. Indeed, as the band forges ahead with the press, campaign supporting the release of **Chapter V**, he knows that he may occasionally try the patience of the media types around him as he delves deep into his soul to find just the proper words to best communicate his feelings about Staind's unique odes of pride and passion.

"The power of words is something I never over-look." he said. "Your thoughts and ideas are going to be heard by more people than you can possibly imagine so you can't be insincere or hite. Perhaps the most important thing I've learned over the last few years is that as a writer, you can never abuse your freedom of speech. You have to be held accountable for what you say. I'm very proud because I feel I've allways done that; there are some successful people out there at the moment who don't. I received so much positive feedback for my lyrics that it always really inspires me when it comes time to write the new songs."

time to write the new songs.

"Songs can develop in so many different ways," he added. "There's never a set manner in which you write them. Some can take hours or even days to come together, others are basically spur-of-the-moment inspiration. So I'm more open than ever to using what works to make a song happen. I tend to be very improvisational with my lyrics—they can be stream-of-consciousness until I hit upon something that sticks. It took us months to get everything to sound just the way we wanted it to on this album. But that's part of the creative process that always draws us back—it can be very inspirational."



## "This album is raw, back-to-basics hard rock."

In light of what passes for "entertainment" in rock and roll circles these days, with everyone from Shock Rock kings like Slipknot to a slew of European "black metal" bands pushing the proverbial limits, it's kind of hard to imagine that at one time Alice Cooper was the unquestioned King Of Outrage. Back in the late '60s and early '70s, Cooper and his band of hard rockin' outlaws rolled out of the Midwest with an androgynous look and a metallic attack that took the music world by storm. Alice's outlandish appearance outraged some and amused others, but somehow most everyone immediately sensed that beneath the intentionally hideous makeup and tattered women's garments lurked the heart of a commercial beast— a guy who had it all planned out from day one.

No, the golf-loving, game-show-playing Alice Cooper may never have possessed the "live and die for rock and roll" attitude of a Kurt Cobain or a Dimebag Darrell, but through his deft songwriting touch, his outrageous showmanship (which on occasion his included the on-stage use of guillotines, electric chairs and live boa constrictors) as well as his skilled business acumen, Cooper emerged as a true rock icon. Such early albums as Billion Dollar Babies and Love It To Death helped open the doors for everyone from Kiss to Motley Crue to Slipknot, in the process launching Cooper on a dizzying roller coaster ride through the highs

#### BY TOM LONG

and lows of rock and roll life.

Today, however, some 35 years after he first hit the top of the charts with his immortal paean to teen angst, *Eighteen*, Cooper is alive and well. In fact, with the appearance of his latest album, **Dirty Diamonds**, which is the 30th release of his amazing career, the always-inventive, continually creative Mr. Cooper has once again reinvented himself. No, he hasn't done away with his trademark sneer nor has he put aside his penchant for wearing eye makeup, black leather or outraging the masses. But what Cooper has done is thrust his music and image prominently into 2005 by once again focusing on the rock-basic attitudes and sounds that first won him acclaim. By reestablishing his turf on the rougher, tougher edge of the hard rock periphery, Cooper has created an album that, somewhat ironically, harks back to the material that first launched his career so many year ago.

so many year ago.

"This album is raw, back-to-basics hard rock," Cooper said. "One of the things I've tried to do on my last few albums is strip everything down and keep that spontaneous kind of feel that you heard on a lot of early Rolling Stones albums. At least this time I let the band do some overdubs—which is something I didn't want on the last album (2003's Eyes of Alice Cooper.)

This one is like the last one, but with a little bit more polish."

Throughout his long and often tempestuous sojourn up the rock mountain, Cooper has maintained a steadfast belief that a good song and a tight band remain the key to both success and longevity. Whether he was wallowing in the depths of depression due to drug and alcohol abuse during the early '80s, or reestablishing his legendary status in the 1990s, Cooper's hard hitting, yet instantly infectious music has remained his career's lifeline. Much like his British alterego, Ozzy Osbourne, Cooper has survived the ups and downs of the rock lifestyle and is all too willing to tell anyone who'll listen that, to no one's surprise, the "ups" are a hell of a lot better. Now with his new disc moving nicely up the sales charts, thanks to tunes like You Make Me Wanna and Run Down the Devil, Cooper feels that he has survived yet another rock and roll "mid-life crisis."

"Every album is a special challenge," he said. 
"You never can sit back and think, 'Hey, the last one sold pretty well, so this one should too.' 
Yeah, you have a certain fan base that'll probably buy everything you put out. But unless you're a band like Slipknot or Metallica, that fan base isn't going to make the album a hit all by themselves. 
It's almost like you've got to go out and reintroduce yourself to everybody every time out. 
Nobody really gives a crap about what you might have done before, they only want to know if the new music rocks."



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# RETRIBUTION EUNIPIETE

BY TOM LONG

here are moments when the members of Judas Priest still seem surprisingly uneasy when they're reminded that 31 years have now passed since this legendary heavy metal unit first began rock and roll life back in Birmingham, England. While the basic concept of more than three decades of metallic service is certainly nothing new to vocalist Rob Halford, guitarists K.K. Downing and Glenn Tipton, bassist lan Hill and drummer Scott Travis, for whatever reason the notion that they're not as spry and vital as they once were seems to sit precariously upon their collective consciousness. Perhaps some of that has to do with the fact that on a nightly basis they must go on stage and do "battle" with bands half their age. Perhaps it has to do with the idea that men in their 50s shouldn't be dressing in skin tight leather and gleaming studs. But whatever the reason may be it seems that despite their occasional bouts with their looming longevity, as they continue to tour the world in support of their latest disc, Angel of Retribution, in the hearts and souls of its members, the hallowed Priest Beast seems to be holding up just fine.

"Sometimes it is a little hard to believe that we've been doing this for as long as we have," Tipton said. "When we're on stage making music it's no different than it was for us in 1975, 1985 or 1995. But perhaps it's an hour or two after getting off stage when you feel a bit more tired and sore. That's when you realize you're not 25 anymore. But it's fine with us. I think we more than compensate for our advanced years with the experience of know-

ing exactly how to put on a great show every night."

The undeniable fact of the matter is that Tipton's assessment of Priest's long-standing talents is right on the mark. As the old saying goes, these guys have *forgotten* more about playing heavy metal music than most bands of their ilk will ever even know. And that notion is fully supported by the news that in 2005 a new generation of fans have discovered the inherent "wonders" of Priest's rough 'n ready style. With Halford now firmly back at the band's helm after a dozen-year absence, and the band's latest disc generating a degree of interest that has allowed these power-packed rockers to perform in front of sold-out crowds on a nightly basis, there can now be little doubt that Judas Priest is back where they belong— living life at the very apex of metal society.

"The degree of response that we've received with this album and tour has been amazingly rewarding," Tipton said. "I don't know if we were ever truly worried about how the fans might respond, but it's only natural that certain questions do cross your mind. But it's all worked out incredibly well for us. There seemed to be a demand for us playing arenas on this tour, and for that we're very thankful. Priest's music has always sounded its best in big halls, so this has been a wonderful way of both presenting what our long-time fans wanted, and hopefully introducing a new generation of fans to the music of Judas Priest."

wanted, and hopefully introducing a new generation of fans to the music of Judas Priest."

Still, despite all of the recent acclaim that has come their way—dating back to Halford's return early in 2004, and the band's headline-grabbing run during that year's Ozzfest—there are those who remain somewhat disappointed by the response afforded Angel of Retribution. Some critics have stated that the album seems too content to merely mine



creative ideas that were fresh in Priest's halcyon days... some 20 years ago. Others cite the disc's tepid sales performance (where it has barely cracked the gold sales level) as evidence that Priest's Golden Era is now well in their past. But, no matter how their latest release may fare in the commercial marketplace, the fact is that fans remain fascinated by Priest's

commercial marketplace, the fact is that fans remain fascinated by Priest's music... whether it be new or old. Sure those followers are turning out in droves more to hear classic metal bits like Living After Midnight, Electric Eye and You've Got Another Thing Coming than new odes like Judas Rising and Hellrider. But apparently that's just the nature of the "beast."

"For us the difficult part has been trying to decide which of the new songs to integrate into the set," Tipton said. "We know what the fans want to hear, which is why we only presented a 'greatest hits' set at Ozzfest last year. But on this tour it's important to mix in the new with the familiar; not only have we featured those hits, along with selected new songs, but we've also delved back into the Priest catalog to play some of the more obscure things that the real fans have always wanted to hear us play. It's a very interesting balance. But you don't want to shove too much down anyone's throat. You always know in the back of your mind that what might be satisfying to us may not hit a responsive nerve with the fans. But we're confident—or dare I say arrogant—

lyour mind that what might be satisfying to us may not hit a responsive nerve with the fans. But we're confident—or dare I say arrogant—enough at this point to believe that we know what will please the fans. That's exactly what we set out to deliver on this album and on this tour. We knew the direction we wanted to take, and we knew how to execute what we felt needed to be done."

The "arrogance" that Tipton alludes to has always been one of Priest's most endearing qualities. Throughout their long and gloried history, fans always sensed that these five Men of Metal always knew more about hard rock—in style, substance and delivery—than just about anyone else on earth. And it's been quite rewarding to realize that despite the passing of time, little has changed regarding either Priest's belief in themselves or in the music they create.

"We have always believed in what we've done." Tipton said. "That was

the music they create.

"We have always believed in what we've done," Tipton said. "That was true when Rob wasn't involved with the band as well. But once he rejoined, and we all gathered together to begin work, the old confidence was immediately there. Once the songs started, we knew we were on the right track, so we let our instincts dictate the direction the songs were going to take. In some ways, the title **Angel of Retribution** plays right along with that. If fans didn't respond to this album they know they will have to deal with the angel of retribution. It's kind of amusing, yet very much in the time-honored Priest philosophy."

lipknot have come full-circle. What started out with the spring, 2004, arrival of **Vol. 3: The Subliminal Verses**, has ended almost two years later with the release of **9.0:Live**, a two-disc set that captures much of the onstage intensity and insanity that this Des Moines-based shock rock unit has perpetrated upon the heavy metal masses throughout their legendary career. Drawing on performances that go back as far as their 2001 world tour, and are as recent as a late-2005 stop in exotic Singapore, the live collection

recent as a late-2005 stop in exotic Singapore, the live collection represents a brilliant, overwhelming and at times intimidating portfolio of everything that d.j. Sid Wilson, bassist Paul Gray, guitarist James Root, drummer Joey Jordison, keyboardist Craig Jones, percussionist Chris Fehn, percussionist Shawn Crahan, guitarist Mick Thomson and vocalist Corey Taylor (a.k.a. 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7 and 8) have brought to the modern metal lexicon.

"This was the way we wanted to end this amazing recording and touring cycle," Jordison said. "The period since **The Subliminal Verses** was released has been the most incredible time

Burger King late last summer in regard to the fact field glass second "Coq Roq" TV commercials— you know, the ones where in fictitious metal band is decked out in bizarre chicken masks and singing songs like Cross the Road Apparently Slipknot viewed the Coq Roq-ers as "competition" — or at least as a group intenging or their mask wearing copyrights. As one might expect. Burger King responded to Slipknot's miller suit with a creater suit or the own, and on and-on it goes.

"Slipknot obviously believed that the Burger King commercial touched a little too close to home," said an on-the-scene source. "They don't need the publicity a suit like this might generate so they felt very strongly about what they were doing."

From live albums to law suits, it's certainly been a slam-ba-way for Shipknot to wind up their **Subliminal Verses** run. That disc has sold over 1.2 million copies in the U.S. alone, while their non-stop touring (which saw them appear on the 2004 *Jaeyermeister* and *Ozzlest* road runs prior to the Knot launching out on their dwn) has been witnessed by close to a million fans around the

glabe Any way you look at it. if a been a truly fas, toric time for this nine man mutant metal army. Perhaps mure was a ever before, the hand rock worst bas grown to anderstand and embrace every thing this truly unique contingent hold dear They resultageous, mendany withernous, volable visionary.

ground-breaking, precedent shattering, parent bothering, idi, you

The simple fact of the making is that the last six years of their lives have been a pulsating formado of non-stop insanity for the Knot. This midwestern unit first soared to the top back in 2000 with their celf-titled debut disc, which introduced their masks and coveralls approach to the rock masses. They followed up that introducess in 2002 with the highly-acctained lows, a disc that further refined their power packed approach. But it wasn't until live 2004 appearance of Vol. 3: The Subliminal Verses that rock land.

round the globe seemed to sense that his Funcus Nine was truly in it to win it in terms of lasting rock mimortality

Nobody but the runs of us really, now what it's like to do what we do but might in and right-out basis, "Jordisen

sad. It's totally exhausting. It drains you down to your soul. But the love it how more than ever before."

The love that all of Slipknot's members have for their band doesn't mean however, that there won't be a looping break before we see another studio disc from this thealrical unit. And during that time you can bet your bottom dolar that Jordison will resurrect his highly acclaimed hard rock unit, the Murdordolls, while Taylor and Root bring back to life their platinum-sulling side-project, Stone Sour, But unlike 2003, when those "outside" bands seemed to threaten Slipknot's on-going existence, this time around it seems safe to say that at some time, in some place—once everyone has regained their metallic equilibrium and replanished their rock and roll souls—the Koot viril rise again.

What the Marcerdo Is do for me is give me a very free per spective on the fans." Jordison saw "Because I play guitar is the band, I'm able to see a side of the stage that I never got to see when I'm slaying drums with the Knot I'm able to get right on the edge and look into the eyes of the fans and see the way they responded to a lot of the responder to



of our lives, and since we know that it's probably going to be a while until there's another Slipknot studio album, we figured this was the perfect time to release a live album— something for the fans to get off on until we come back."

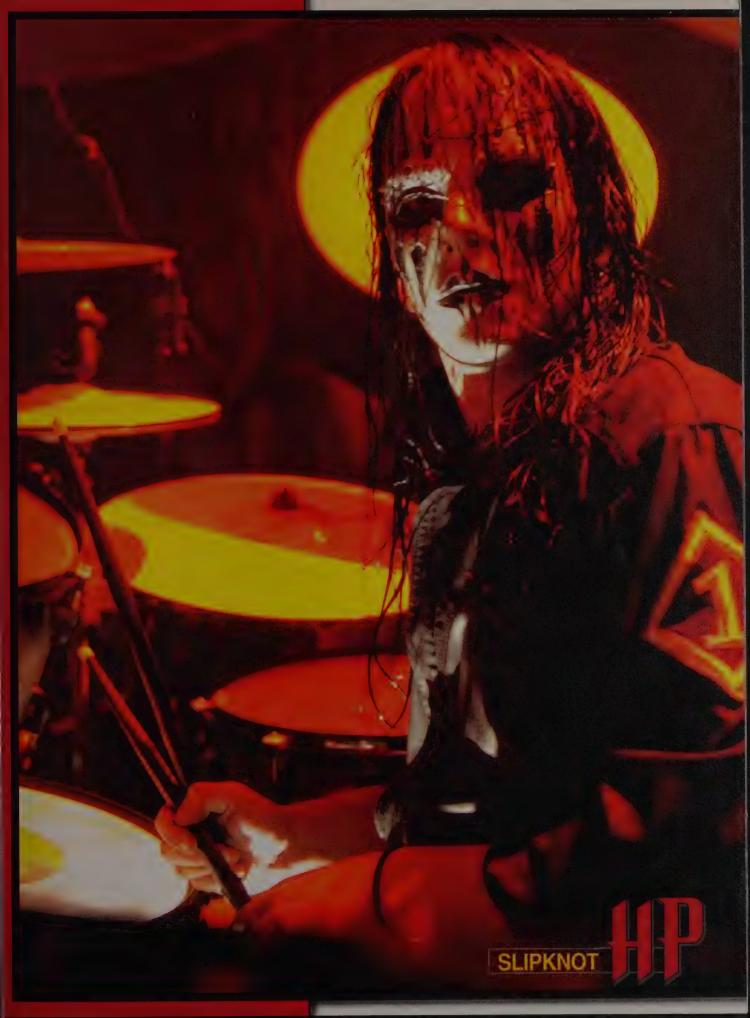
Of course, a "mere" disc can do little to communicate the visual chaos that is so integral to the Knot's live presentation. On stage, dressed in their identical coveralls, their hideous masks projecting an aura of unmatched menace, there is nothing in the rock and roll world that can top the sheer, visceral impact of Slipknot. But the fact of the matter is that their new live set isn't *supposed* to cap-

# "This was the perfect time for a live album— something for the fans to feed on."

ture each and every element of the Knot's metal attack. It is designed to be a *classic* live album, a place where fans can focus on the band's music and nothing but the music— the type of disc that is too rarely heard in hard rock circles these days. Featuring such songs as *The Blister Exists, Pulse of the Maggots, Duality, Disasterpieces, The Heretic Anthem* and *Purity*, the collection represents not only the culmination of Slipknot's multi-year dominance of the heavy metal world, but also a fitting testament to the too-often-overlooked artistic brilliance of this masked Midwestern crew

"Our tours over the last two years have been full of surprises," Jordison said. "So we did our best to throw some surprises into the live album as well. What's interesting is that as we all listened to some of the tracks— especially since they cover quite a bit of time during our career— we noticed how we've changed as a band. We've gotten even tighter and more intense over the years."

But releasing a live disc and completing their latest world tour hasn't been all that's been on the Knot's ever-busy agenda as of late. Perhaps the most intriguing item that has graced the band's docket in recent months was the legal action they took against



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# PICKING UP THE PACE

t's now been nearly two years since the Darkness' debut disc. Permission to Land, first made these high-styling hard rockers instant mega-stars in Europe... as well as overnight contenders in America. During that time vocalist/guitarist Justin Hawkins, guitarist Dan Hawkins and drummer Ed Graham have gone through their ups-and-downs, often being the subject of derision in the fickle tabloids of their native England, while at the same time losing some of their initial career momentum on this side of the Atlantic. But with the addition of new bassist Richie Edwards (who replaced Frankie Poullain late in 2005), and the release of their latest disc, One Way Ticket To Hell...And Back, it would appear as if these British bashers are once again primed to prove that their vintage sound and outrageous attitude are destined to make them major metal movers in 2006

"We've gone through a lot— especially for a band this young," Justin said. "Back home the papers love to follow us and try to get under our skin... with no success, I may add. In America it's a different story, we went from a band on-the-rise to a band that was almost forgotten. We know we have some

catching up to do."

Despite their limited time on the hard rock playing field, one thing has quickly become apparent—the Darkness leave no room for middle ground. Either you love this overtly campy, retro rock unit with all your heart and soul, or you despise them with an equal passion. That's the kind of reaction Justin and his merry men seem to enjoy eliciting from their frenzied fans on both sides of the Big Pond. As their latest disc begins its ride up the charts, this quartet's ability to cast an almost satirical (though sincerely heartfelt) eye upon hard rock history, has managed to draw praise from those who "get it" and outright disdain from those who don't.

"We can't worry about those people that we piss off," Justin said. "If they don't like us, they don't have to hang around. Go listen to Coldplay and leave us alone!"

For those who may have missed it the first time around (and if you did, where the heck have you been?), here's the "secret" to the Darkness' success: Mixing AC/DC-styled guitar chords with Queen-influenced stage shows and vintage Def Leppard hair styles.

the Darkness have become the apple of so many eyes— and the spit in the eye of so many others. After all, in these decidedly different rock and roll times, when angst and aggression seem to be the code words for instant hard rock acceptance, do we really need a glam-bam-thank-you-m'am metal band sporting a parly-hearty attitude— especially one whose frontman's singing style has been derisively compared to that of Tiny Tim's? Judging by the reaction that this unit's sound has generated, apparently we do!

"We know that we do create a stir,"

"We know that we do create a stir,"

Justin said. "That's part of the fun for us.

We want to see people in the audience with

Getting the entire musical message that the Darkness bring forth isn't as easy as it may initially appear. While at times this unit may come across as an almost two-dimensional rock and roll "cartoon" featuring big hair, big guitar licks and musical hooks big enough to land a whale, the undeniable fact is that there's more to this quartet than meets the eye or ear... much more! Contained within their songs is clear evidence that this band has not only learned their rock history lessons well... they've actually absorbed them. With their tongues firmly-planted in their slightly make-up coated cheeks, this metalmeets-glam unit seems quite at home when

# "We've gone through a lotespecially for a band this young."

their eyes open in surprise, if not amazement. We don't even mind if more people hate us than love us— we expect that. We'll do anything in order to get people to take a little extra notice."

One of the things that the Darkness are doing these days in order to ensure they get that "little extra" attention is planning their biggest American tour yet Throughout the winter and well into mid-2006, these English aces will stay true-blue to the call of the road, creating as much caustic chaos as possible wherever they choose to plug in their guitars and turn their amps to "11". Indeed, much like their look and their music, the Darkness seem intent on doing things the "old fashioned way"— by getting on their tour bus and going... and going... and going until the wheels come off both figuratively and literally.

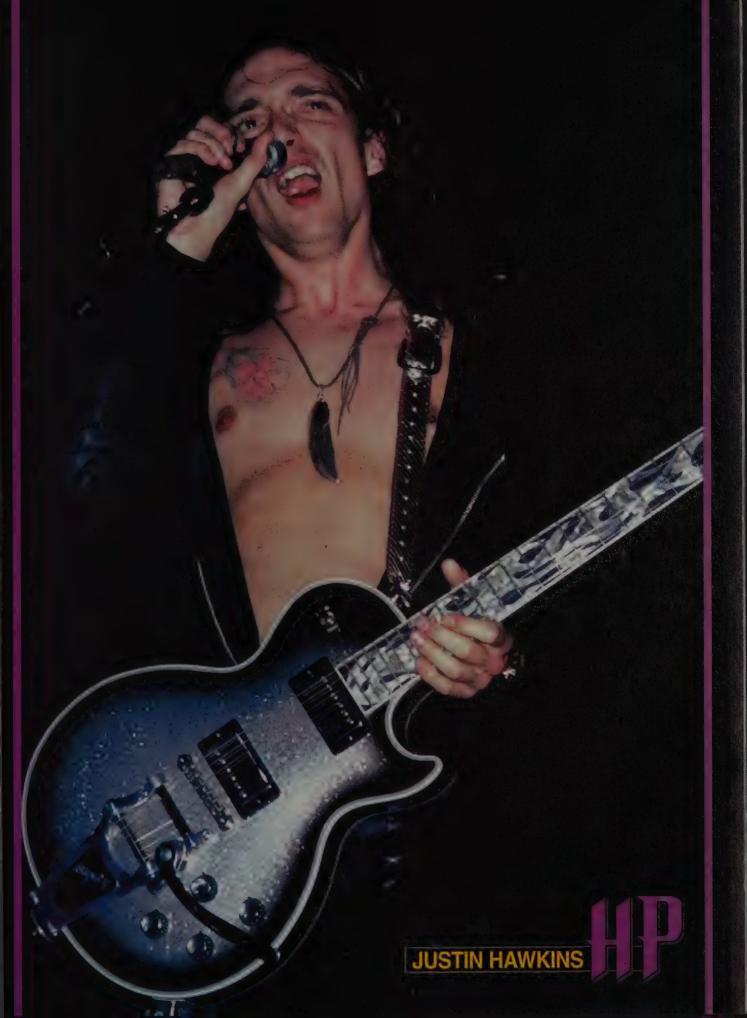
"One of the things you note if you look at your rock and roll history books is that the only real way for a British band to get noticed in America is by touring their asses off. That was true in 1970, and it's still true today. It's great that radio and MTV have given us a bit of a head start, but we want to go out there and meet the fans one by one. That's the way to really get the momentum back. People may have heard of us, they may have even seen us on TV, but until they come out and see us, they haven't really gotten the full message."

comparisons to some of rock's most legendary forces are thrown their way.

"I can understand it when people compare some of the things I do to Freddie Mercury," said Justin in regard to the late, legendary Queen frontman. "After all, we both have a fondness for wearing stripes on stage! And if when I jump on a friend's shoulders and go throughout the arena when playing my guitar, people do think about Angus Young. That's fine with me."

There's no question that if confidence leads directly to success, then nothing is about to stop the Darkness from attaining each and every one of their avowed rock and roll goals. This is a band that wears their outrageous attitude like a badge of honor, and as their new disc picks up where their previous one left off, it seems that nothing is about to deter this fearless foursome from accomplishing exactly what they set out to do— to save rock and roll! It's a difficult task, but it's one that Justin Hawkins and his boys seem primed and ready to tackle.

"We've already shown Europe what we can do," he said. "But America is entirely a different matter. It's so much bigger, and it's very unpredictable. It's very important to us to get recognition here because this is the true home of rock and roll. We're intent to prove that we can take what we've learned and hold our own with anyone. If you don't believe that, just come out to one of our shows."



# "The chances for a new Sabbath album are presently better than they've been in years."

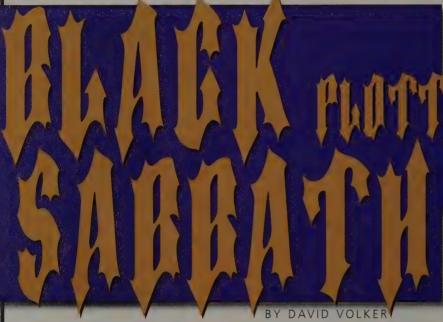
eezer Butler has been at the core of the Black Sabbath music machine for much of that band's 36 years career. Oh sure, he's ventured away from the nest from time to time (even on occasion recording and touring with Sabbandmate Ozzy Osbourne's solo outfit.) But in his heart and soul, this native of Birmingham, England, has always maintained his direct link to the Sabbath mothership. Now, as this hallowed heavy metal institution (which in addition to bassist Butler and vocalist Osbourne features guitarist Tony lommi and drummer Bill Ward) winds up their latest headlining Ozzfest run,

of our best-known songs. But there were some significant changes. One of the things I enjoyed most was the chance to play *Dirty Woman*, a song we hadn't performed live in years. We also introduced an instrumental version of *Symptom of the Universe* into the set, which was a lot of fun. Ozzy doesn't particularly like that song because he has some trouble singing it. But Tony developed this instrumental version that is great to play, and it provides the fans with at least a taste of something different.

**HP:** You mention that Ozzy had trouble singing Symptom of the Universe. Is that often a limiting factor in your set choices? discussed in far more detail than ever before. The subject obviously comes up quite often, and before this it just seemed that there were certain issues involved— whether it was Ozzy's commitment to something else, or whatever. At the moment, though, it seems like it actually could happen. We're still not there yet, but let's just say that the chances of a new Sabbath album being recorded are a lot better right now than they were a year ago.

**HP:** How much pressure would there be on Sabbath if everyone finally gave the "go" signal to a new album?

**GB:** (Laughing) I think about that a lot. The pressure would be *enormous*. We have such a strong legacy now that if we couldn't come up with something brilliant, I don't think any of us would want to do it. You can't just go into the studio for a month or two and come up with a Sabbath album. We've tried that before and it



Butler's thoughts begin to turn towards the future— one he hopes will include the recording of a new Sabbath album in addition to his touring behind, **Ohmwork**, the third disc from his side project, GZR. Recently we caught up with Butler to hear more about the possibilities of the first Sabbath disc in more than 25 years to feature the band's original lineup.

Hit Parader: How would you rate Sabbath's performances at this year's *Ozzfest* as compared to last year's?

Geezer Butler: I think we played much better this year. It's because of a variety of circumstances which include the fact that we played three weeks of European dates prior to the start of Ozzfest and the fact that Ozzy himself is in much better shape this year. If you recall, last year he was still recovering somewhat from his ATV accident and his stamina wasn't at its best. But this year he's lost weight— in fact he's actually rather skinny— and he's in very good shape. He's able to keep going on stage throughout the set, which is something he wasn't able to do last year.

HP: How did this year's set differ from past Sabbath shows?

**GB**: The basics were still the same; I imagine at this point we're rather locked in to playing most

**GB:** The songs we play are something we all need to agree on. There's no point in presenting something that one of us perhaps doesn't want to do, or doesn't feel comfortable in performing. Ozzy is fine with most of the songs, just as we all are. That one happened to be a song we had discussed playing on-and-off for a long time. It is a difficult song to sing... we all realize that. So we came up with this alternative and everyone is fine with that. It gives Tony a chance for another solo, and it happens to be one of the more clever Sabbath things he's come up with in a while.

HP: On what terms did Sabbath leave at the end of this year's Ozzfest?

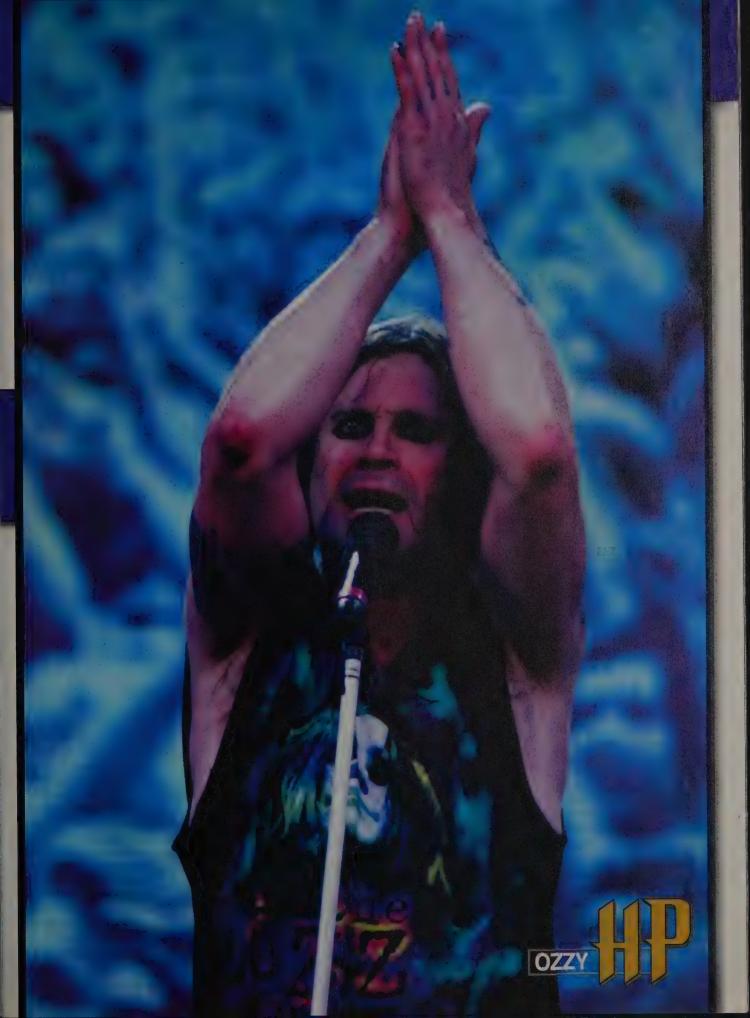
GB: On a very good note. I think we're all closer as people, and more confident as a band, than we've been in a very long time. Last year, when the tour ended we really didn't know what might happen next in terms of Sabbath. I know that concerned both Tony and I quite a bit. In fact, we both headed off to work on solo projects because we didn't know what the future held for Sabbath. But this year, all the talk is very positive about keeping our momentum going.

HP: Would that momentum maintenance possibly include the recording of a new album? GB: It's certainly been discussed, and it's been didn't work. The inspiration has to be there, along with the proper degree of time, planning and commitment from everyone involved. If we can get that, then I see no reason why we can't seriously consider finally making this happen. **HP:** You mention the solo projects that you and Tony recently completed. He has his **Fused** album with Glenn Hughes, and you have a new GZR disc, **Ohmwork**, which is your third solo release

GB: Yes, it's hard to believe that it's finally out because we've been working on some of the songs that appear on Ohmwork for the last seven years! I think in tone this one is more like my first project, Plastic Planet, than the last one, Black Science, which featured a lot of keyboards. There were originally a lot of keyboards on these tracks as well, but after letting them sit around for a while, we came back in, stripped them down, and presented them as more basic rock tracks. We wanted to be able to play these songs live, and we can now basically reproduce them on stage as a rock and roll unit.

HP: Is it just happenstance that both you and Tony have gone back to playing heavy, almost Sabbath-style music on your latest solo efforts?

GB: I think not. That's the frame of mind we're in. I love his new album, and I've told him so. There are times that he's gotten away from what he does best, but not this time. For me, this album showcases my song writing and my love for interesting music. If all of this can translate into something special for Sabbath's future, then I'm sure that is something that will make each of us very happy.



often appears that for Trent Reznor, talking about himself and his myriad musical accomplishments ranks somewhere between having elective hernia surgery and root canal. Yup, Nine Inch Nail's secretive main man has never particularly warmed to the notion of opening up his heart and soul to the eyes and ears of the inquiring world. But as he continues to promote his latest highly successful offering. With Teeth, one fact has clearly emerged; this time around Reznor will do just about anything to get people interested in his new work... even if it means talking about it!

"What keeps me excited about this album is that it is so songbased," he said. "In that regard With Teeth reminds me of some of the earlier albums that I did. It's not that similar in its approach or its lyrics—I've grown so much since then. But I like the idea that songs carry it

along."

While its songs may hold the key to Reznor's new creation, the fact is that many of his thoughts remain cloaked behind a well-constructed maze of lyrical complexity. With Nine Inch Nails that's simply the way it is... and the way it's always going to be. That's a notion already widely accepted by millions of NIN fans dotting the face of Planet Earth who

view any offering made by Reznor— dubbed by his more ardent supporters as The New-Age Musical Messiah— as worthy of their respect, time and support. Even when he recently came out and rather surprisingly admitted his now-conquered addiction problems of a few years back, his legion of supporters stood ready to commend rather than condemn.

"I became more in touch with myself and with the people around me because of the disease that I needed to conquer," he said. "I realized that I was using my music and my career as

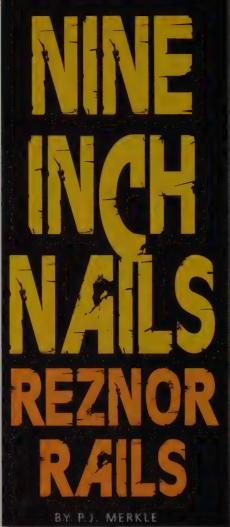
a hiding place rather than as a source of creativity. I needed to change all of that, and I did when I began work on With Teeth."

True to his mercurial nature,
Reznor continues to calculate each
and every move he makes, forcing

those around him to sweat out the potential consequences of his actions...and inactions. Like a western gun-fighter of old, Reznor seems to garner great pleasure out of making those around him squirm as they wait and wonder— coercing those caught in his blinding aura to wither under the strain of his imposing nature. Sometimes it seems like it's all just a game to Reznor— a high stakes battle of human chess with winner-take-all results. But Reznor doesn't play that game by conventional rules; never has, never will. In fact, it often seems as if he creates his own set of rules as he goes along, hoping to create as much of a ripple in his wake as humanly possible.

"I think I'm more aware of what people expect from me and what I expect from myself— than ever before," he said. "Having gone through a very intense personal ordeal over the last few years, where at times I felt I was losing my identity before I found my sobriety, I have come to understand a great deal more about my role in things."

Clearly, at times during his 15 year career Trent Reznor



soul. To some on the rock and roll periphery— those that only know Reznor through his thought-provoking albums or his often unsettling MTV videos— he remains a figure of considerable mystery and intrique. To those within his inner circle he stands as the single most dynamic force operating within the rock and roll sphere. Perhaps it's only fitting that Reznor seems to derive great satisfaction from the radically divergent reactions his larger-than-life aura elicits. After all, here's a multi-faceted artist who appears to thrive in a world filled with tension, controversy and even occasional acrimony. Such emotions serve to supply his music with a nealthy dose of its cutting-edge charm and provide his lyrics with their ability to dissect and then disseminate unique insights into the human condition. But apparently underneath it all lurks the heart of a true star- someone who innately understands the impact his decidedly off-center musical stance will have on those around him...and who revels in that reaction. "When you become content,

has been one very misunderstood

"When you become content, you run the risk of becoming complacent," Reznor stated. "I don't know if I ever really want to become too content with the music I make. I want it to keep changing, and keep

challenging those who hear it.'

ke the idea that

Certainly few efforts in recent memory can rival With Teeth when it comes to challenging the listener on virtually every level, as well as in virtually every conceivable aspect of its presentation. There are many long-time NIN supporters who have already expressed outright surprise (though very little dismay) over the myriad musical twists and turns presented throughout Reznor's thought-provoking new set. Certainly Nine Inch Nails' latest release already ranks among the most ambitious and adventur-

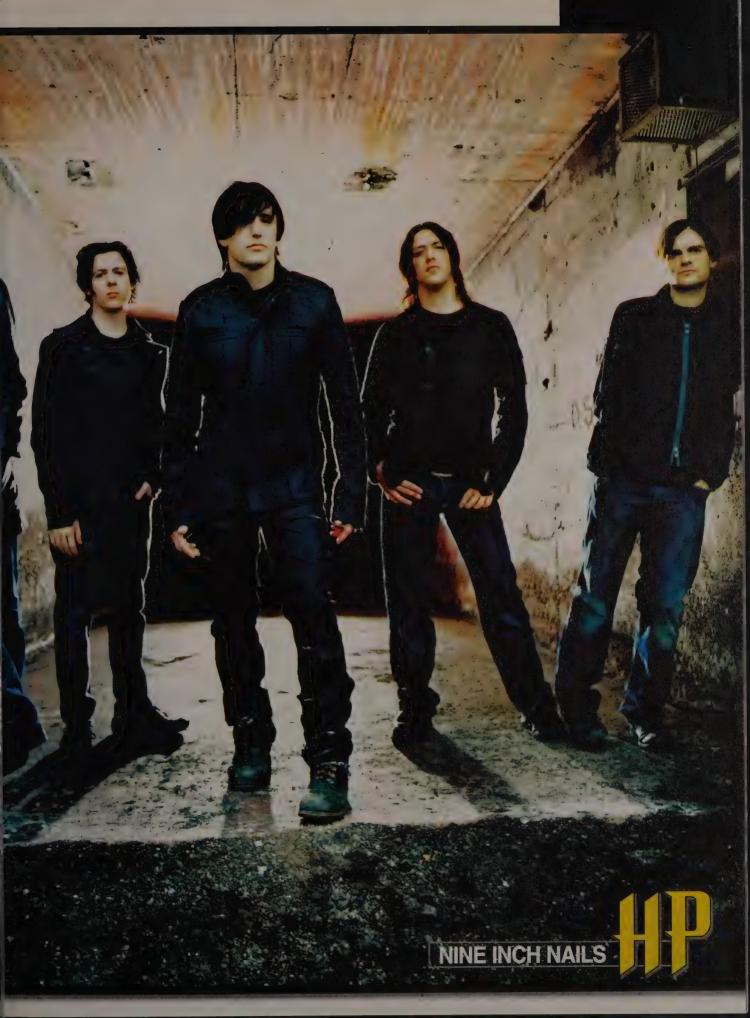
ous creations in the recent history of the rock and roll form. And while Reznor may scoff at such a notion, viewing it as somewhat presumptuous and misleading, the undeniable fact is that thanks to Reznor's creative brilliance, NIN now stands head

and shoulders above their rock and roll contemporaries in virtually every aspect of the Modern Music experience.

Rather then contenting themselves with merely playing music, Nine Inch Nails seem intent on becoming their music, utilizing a dizzying array of state-of-the-art electronics to create a sound explosion totally different from anything else currently inhabiting the rock and roll landscape. While it is true that much of the material contained on With Teeth is significantly divergent from anything presented on any previous band effort, at the same time there is clear evidence of the evolutionary process that Reznor's music has recently undergone in order to get it from "here" to "there." In both style and function, the disc is indeed "radical", a sharp departure from the expected and the norm. But, then again, would Trent Reznor have it any other way?

"This may be the most important album I ever do," he said. "I feel I've come through my ordeal and emerged on the other side."





# AUDIOS ROAD WARRIORS

In the second of the second of

"What can I say?" Morello asked. "Anything I might say would pale next to the reality of what's going on. It really has been amazing! It's been so rewarding because I think on we took our

artistry to the next level, and by doing so I believe we made the best album of our lives. I know that some long-time fans might have some trouble with a statement

eversial touring coup. But when on decidedly left-wing political bent that onello. Commertord and Wilk express ir previous unit, Rage Against the hine, the desire of Audioslave to literative.

Machine, the desire of Audioslave to literally gowhere no rock band had gone before begins to become a bit more understandable. Considering that the band actually lost money while undertaking this out-of-the-way road stop, there were obviously other motivations behind their decision.

"It was something that meant so much to us, Morello said. "It was the opportunity of a lifetime. We certainly weren't motivated by money to play in Havana. It was more the chance to appear in a place where no American rock band had been in over 40 years and reach thousands of people with our music. It was an experience that I know I'll never forget." Back on their native soil, the response to Audioslave's latest disc and tour has been no less enthusiastic. Out of Exite made a Number One chart debut upon its arrival, and since then the explosive disc has sold well over a million copies. Similarly, the band's road efforts have been greeted by sold-out throngs from Albany to Anaheim, with the band's bold blend of new tunes and select old favorites (drawn from the Rage Against the Machine and Soundgarden playbooks) drawing rave reviews from all lucky enough to.

Tom Morello: "This has been the most rewarding experience of my life."

these must-see event. "We're very thankful for the kind of response we've received," Morello said. "Some people may "We've think that just because we all came from successful managed to take our bands that the success of this band was a virtual guarantee. Well, that would be nice, but it was never true— at least in our minds. We had to come out and prove ourselves from the moment we first got together. If anything, our past histories only artistry raised everyone's expectations to a very high level. "If we hadn't met those expectations, we would to the next level." have heard about it long and loud. But I believe that we did meet those expectations... and maybe even exceeded them. There's no way around it-that is very satisfying. We're very proud of the material on Out of Exile and believe it stands up to anything any of us has ever been involved with before. That's why we're not scared to showcase these songs against some of the best-known songs from our past. We love playing those older songs-and the fans love hearing them. I think we do a great job on them, and since they are an integral part of our shared histories, I see no reason why we shouldn't be playing them." The simple fact of the matter is that the incredible success of **Out of Exile** proves what many fans—and many members of the media—have long suspected... that this fearless foursome constitute what is quite possibly the best hard rock band in the world. Drawing on their hallowed musical roots, this star-studded group has quickly and effectively shown that they are without peer when it comes to creating cutting-edge, yet highly accessible rock and roll music. Now it appears as if Audioslave has overcome all of the initial problems that plagued their 2002 birth to emerge in 2005 as the flag bearers of the entire hard rock form. There's no question that we were tested early on by forces around the band," Morello said. "It wasn't the four of us who were causing any problems, but when you bring different lawyers, different booking agents, different managers and even different record labels into the mix, something has to give- and it was almost Audioslave! But because of the bond that we forged between ourselves, we knew that we could overcome those outside pressures... and we sensed that we could become stronger because of it. We have!" "For this album I changed the entire manner in which I approached preparing for the studio," he added. "I totally let go of my inhibitions and traditions; usually I make long lists of everything from the riffs I want to use to possible solos. I usually go in prepared to an almost ridiculous extent. But this time, for whatever reason, I took a much more relaxed approach to it. I was intent on using inspiration rather than preparation, and I believe a lot of that had to do with the total confidence I had in everyone around me. That's not to say I haven't been confident before, but working with a vocalist and lyricist like Chris changes things up a bit. You know that he can handle Chris Cornell anything you might sponta-neously decide to throw at Audioslave has become a true band him. For me at was something

PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO

of a leap of faith, and I'm very

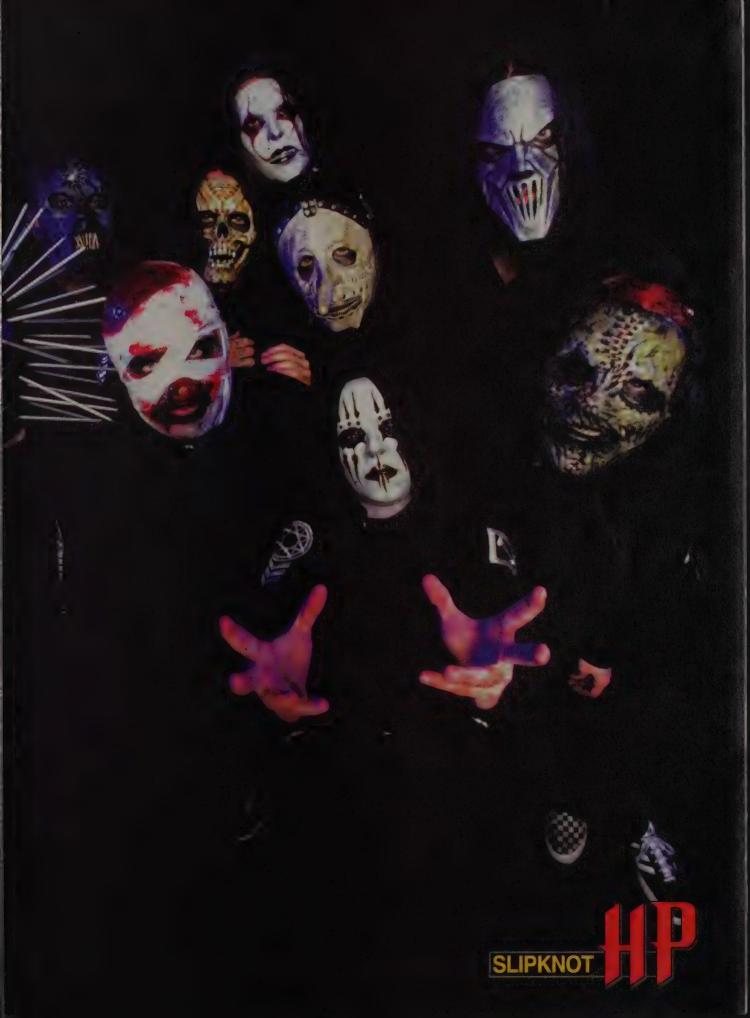
glad I did it."

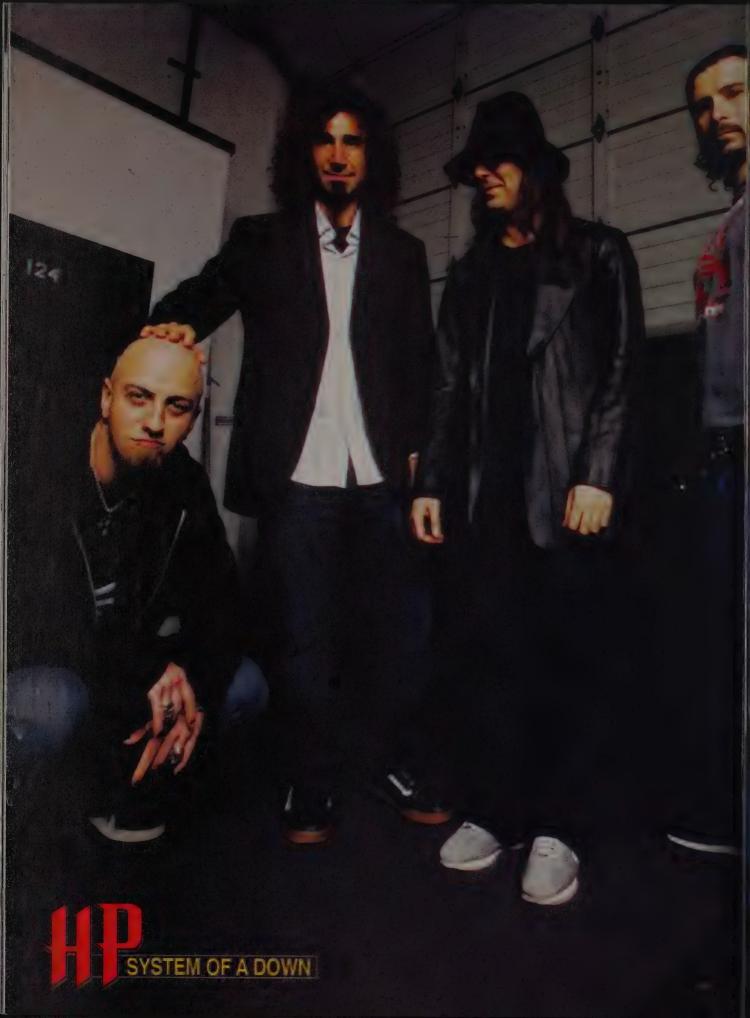
HIT PARADER 45

over the last three

years."

## SSIE W will long be remembered by some- at least by those in the so-called "mainstream" media- as the year that hard rock and heavy metal made their triumphant "returns" to the contemporary music scene. Of course, those of us in-the-know will seriously question where those observers felt the metal form had been... and where exactly it was returning from. Sure, the efforts of high profile Velvet bands like Audioslave, Nine Inch Nails and Revolver: One System of a Down cast the form squarely in of 2005's most the spotlight by making Number One chart debuts in 2005. But there was more to successful units metal's recent rise than that- much more. Just as some of the style's most high-profile acts were roaring back into action after multi-year absences, the likes of Slipknot, Judas Priest and Disturbed maintained their vice-like hold on the public consciousness through exciting new album releases and incessant touring. The indisputable, undeniable fact is that no matter what some slack-jawed, part-time observers of the contemporary music scene may state, heavy metal has *never*, *ever* been away! Indeed, the form enjoyed one of its strongest years in 2005, with both established superstars and young upstarts making their loud and proud presence felt... time and time again. But all of that variedyet-notable success was merely the culmination of a growth process that follows the natural ebbs and flows of the rock and roll world. It's just that in '05 it appeared to some as if many of the form's stars were in high-profile form, making those sedate members of the media once again sit up and take notice. "It's always very amusing when I hear people say how hard rock is making a PHOTOS: ANNAMARIA DISANTO





# "It's amusing to hear people say metal is making a 'comeback.""

comeback," said Audioslave's Tom Morello. "All that tells me is that they've not followed what's been happening in music very closely. They're caught up in what's trendy rather than with what's good."

As the high-profile likes of Mudvayne, Velvet Revolver, Staind and Iron Maiden made their big-time mark on the 2005 rock world, their efforts were supported by the wall-shaking arrival of a wide variety of previously lesser-known bands on the international scene—including such acts as Lamb of God, Shadows Fall and Killswitch Engage. To the eyes and ears of many, it was this insurgence of fresh talent that truly marked '05 as something special in the annals of rock and roll. In fact, with events such as *Ozzfest* and to a lesser extent, *Jagermeister* and *The Subliminal Verses Tour* providing a proper forum for the advancement of these fastrising metal upstarts, it would clearly seem as if '05 emerged as a vital launching ground for hard rock's future stars.

"Having the chance to get out there and play, whether it was at *Ozzfest* or *Subliminal Verses*, made all the difference for us," said Shadows Fall frontman Brian Fair. "We've been around long enough to know just how vital that kind of exposure is to a young band's career, and we'll always be thankful to the people and bands that gave

us that opportunity."

One of the key bands that provided just such an opportunity for up-and-coming acts was Slipknot, who in addition to headlining the *Subliminal Verses Tour* (where a wide variety of indie and underground groups were featured in addition to the headline attractions), proved to be one of the most important and influential bands of 2005. While their disc, **Vol. 3: The Subliminal Verses**, was actually a 2004 release, the band's non-stop touring schedule, as well as the end-of-'05 appearance of their first-ever live disc, marked this Des Moines-based shock rock unit as being among the year's prime movers-and-shakers.

"This has been an incredible year for us on so many levels," said Knot vocalist Cory Taylor. "We've gone non stop for more than 18 months, and we're playing better now than when we first went back on the road. And if our tours have helped open the doors for some other bands, that's a great compliment to everyone involved."

Another tour that helped open the floodgates for upcoming hard rock talent was the 2005 *Ozzfest*, which in its 10th Anniversary campaign, featured metal stalwarts like Black Sabbath and Iron Maiden, along with a flood of new bands, including Mastodon (who recently inked a major label deal), Arch Enemy, As I Lay Dying, Trivium and In Flames. While some among those in attendance stated that this year's lineup lacked both the "surprise" element and the "breakout" star status enjoyed by past events, there was no question that this summer's *Ozzfest* ranked among the best in the tour's long history.

"I thought this was one of the best *Ozzfests* that I've been a

"I thought this was one of the best *Ozzfests* that I've been a part of," said Sabbath's Tony lommi. "I don't know if I can really put my finger on it; perhaps it was just that we played rather well on a night-in, night-out basis. But the bands that I saw seemed to be determined to try and present something original, which

hasn't always been true in the past.'

Despite the significant inroads that so many new band made in the hard rock world of 2005, it was still the form's established stars that focused the majority of public attention the form's way. From Audioslave (who scored big with their sophomore release, **Out of Exile**) to Nine Inch Nails (who returned to the scene after a four-year absence with their best-selling **With Teeth**), metal in all of its various forms and guises rocked the world to its very core. But perhaps the year's most significant band proved to be System of a Down, who hit no less than two commercial and artistic home runs— first with their spring release, **Mezmerize**, then again in the late fall with that disc's companion piece, **Hypnotize**.

"When we started recording, we had more than 30 songs that we wanted to include on the new album," said SOAD guitarist Daron Malakian. "Obviously, there's no way of doing that without releasing two discs. We decided against doing that at the same time in order to allow fans to properly absorb the first batch of songs, and we didn't want to do something like **Steal This Album**, because too many people looked at those songs as 'left overs.' Nothing could have been further from the truth. The

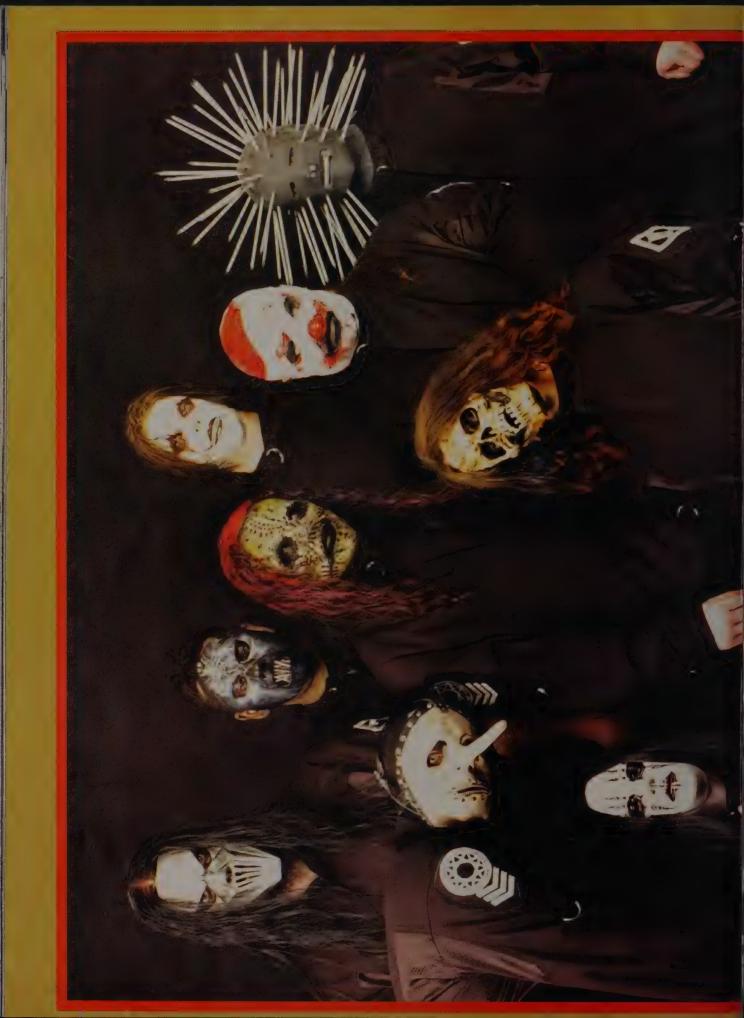


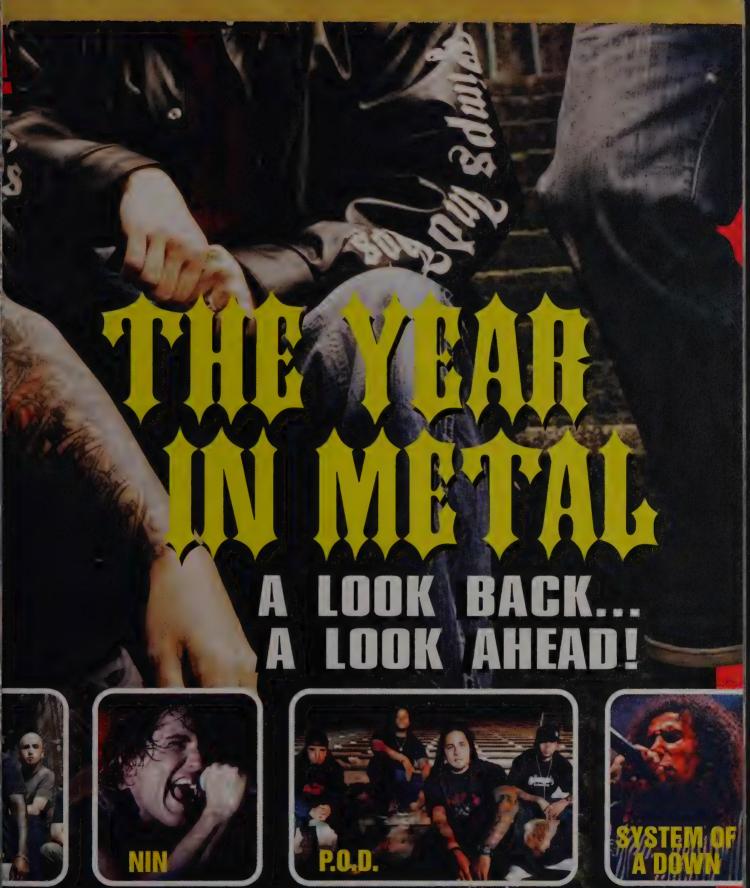
material on **rypnouze**, as an example, is just as strong— if not even a bit stronger— than the material on **Mezmerize**."

Among the bands that made major end-of-the year metal statements were Staind, P.O.D. Sevendust and Disturbed, whose **Ten Thousand Fists**, garnered many Album of the Year nominations. In all, these releases— in conjunction with the flood of memorable headbanging produce that emerged throughout the past 12 months— clearly marked 2005 as one of the most potent and memorable years in recent metal history. Has hard rock come back? Hell no! It's NEVER been away! But it just may be more exciting and unpredictable than ever as '05 draws to a climactic close.

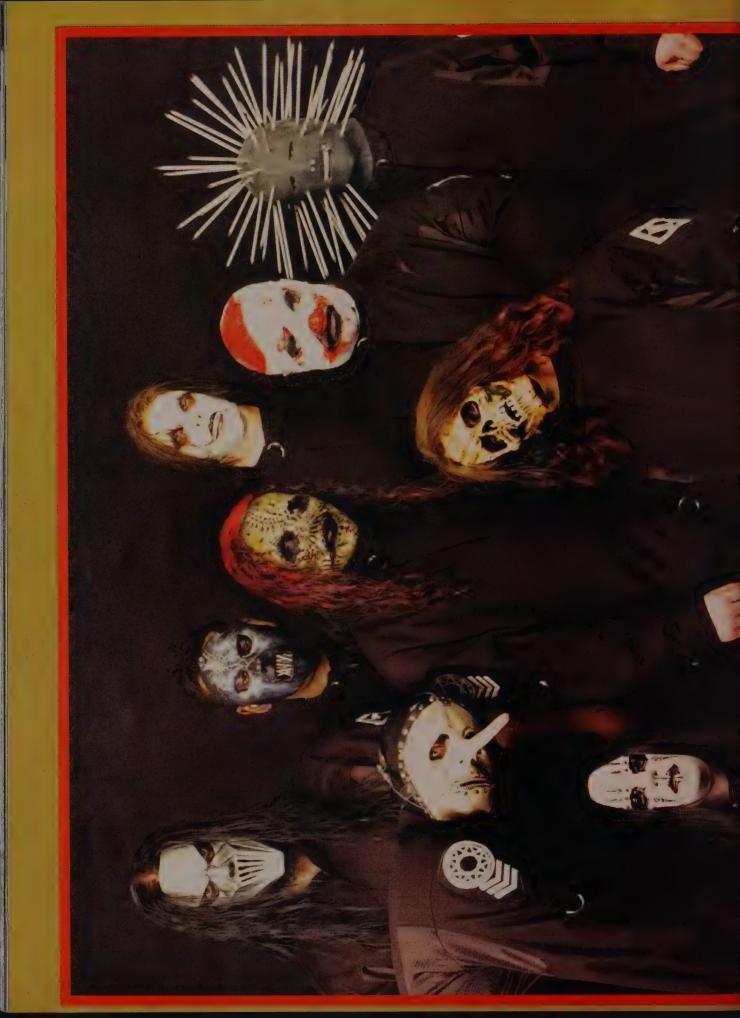
"One of the things we wanted to do on this album was take hard rock in something of a different direction," said Disturbed's vocalist David Draiman. "We grew up on 'old school' metal. Then, somehow, we got lumped in with the 'new metal' movement. Well, I think we've drawn on those old school roots to create something fresh. It just shows how this form of music, even after all these years, is still quite capable of reinventing itself."

PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO



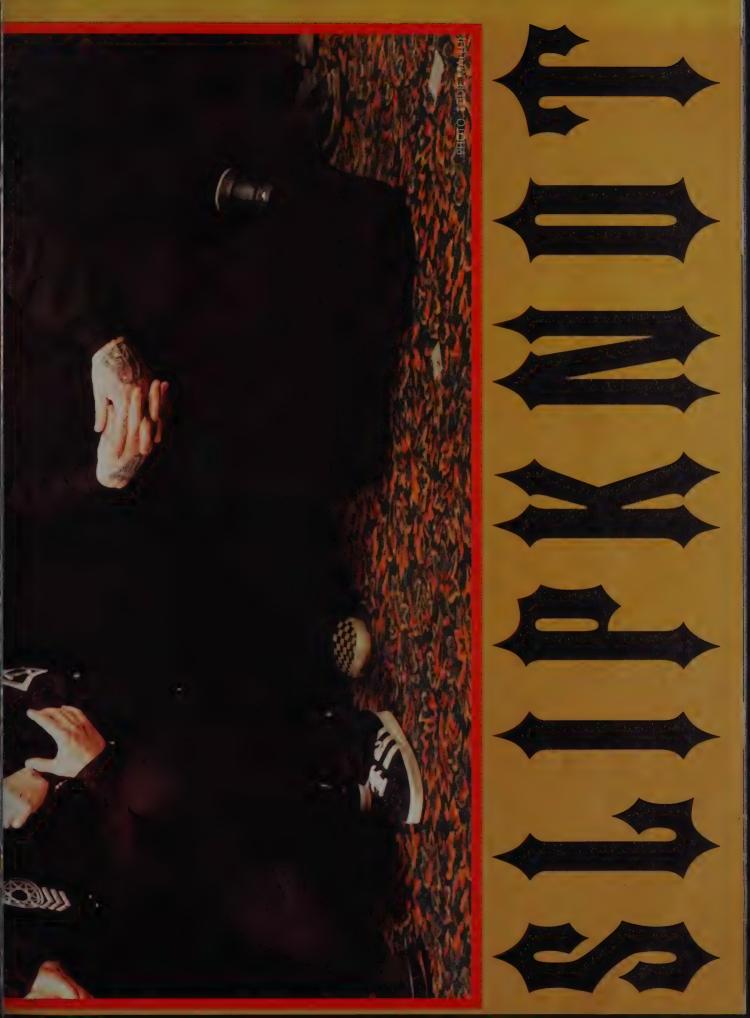




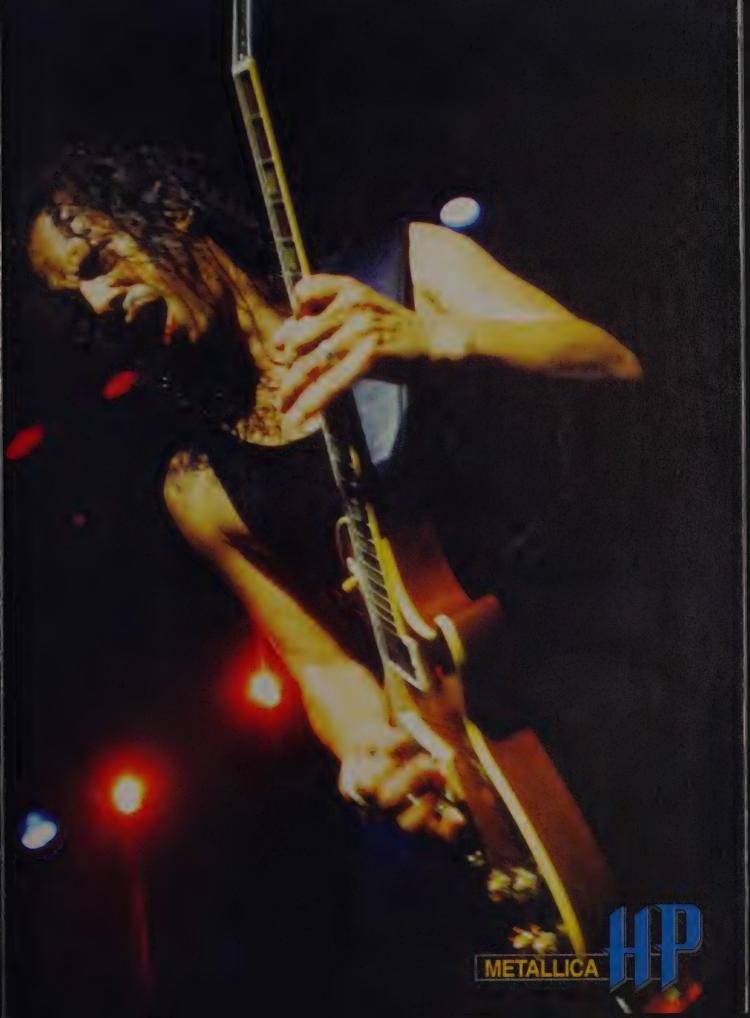


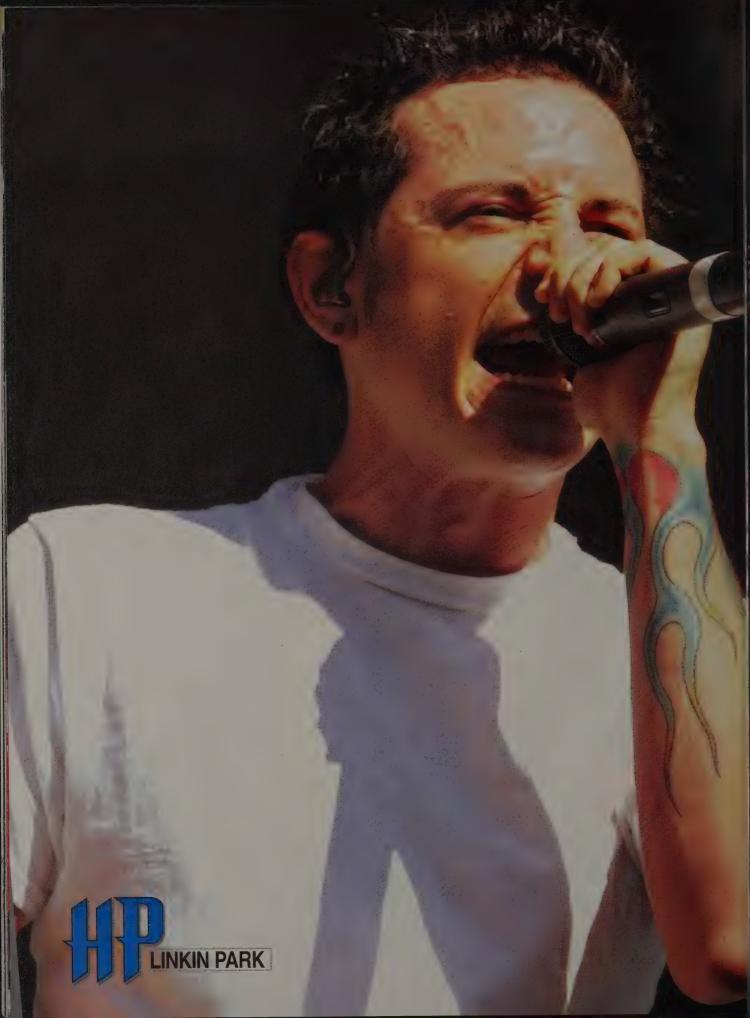










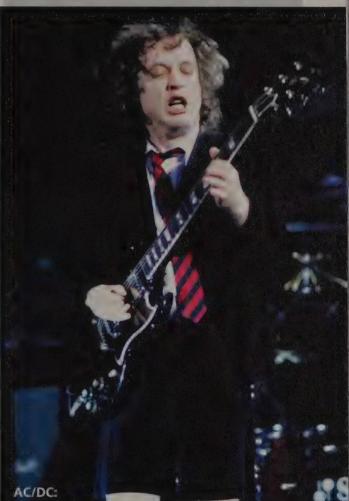


### WHAT WILL HAPPEN WITH SLIPKNOT, METALLICA & KORN DURING THE YEAR AHEAD.

has *nothing* to do with the ability or willingness of these multi-platinum rap/metal masters to make new music. It has *everything* to do with a still-escalating "war" that has erupted between the group and their long-time record label concerning the distribution of future profits derived from LP album revenues. But this is certainly not the first time such a conflict has emerged between a band and a label, and it invariably won't be the last. It's our bet that with a little corporate mumbojumbo, this problem will be soon alleviated and the LP pack's first studio disc since 2003's **Meteora** will emerge in 2006. In the mean time, enjoy the new solo album put out by vocalist Mike Shinoda.

- METALLICA: It's almost hard to believe that Metallica were absent from the metal kingdom for the entirety of 2005. Their music is so pervasive, their image so overwhelming, that even when these West Cost master blasters are trying to lay low, their influence remains as powerful as their sound. Sure they launched an "All Metallica" on-line radio source, and they put together an "early days" DVD, but there was no touring and no new album from Ulrich, Hetfied, Hammett and Trujillo. That could change in 2006, though the band hasn't even started recording their next disc, and as we all know, the Metalli-men are a notoriously slow-working studio bunch.
- KORN: They've got a new label and a part-time new guitarist (ex-OTEP six stringer, Rob Patterson, who replaces the departed Brian "Head" Welch— at least on tour), so with everything once again falling in line, it seems inevitable that Korn will be a major force on the 2006 hard rock scene. With a great deal of industry attention currently being focused their way (thanks, in part, to the appearance of their new album, **See You On The Other Side**, which singnals the start of this unit's "partnership" with a new record label), it seems as if the months ahead will emerge as a key time in the decade-long career of this Bakersfield, CA-based hard rock unit. Can they regain the commercial momentum that made them one of the major rock forces of the '90s? Will the defection of a key member serve to distract or revitalize this ever-tempestuous unit? We should all have the answers shortly!
- SLIPKNOT: Here's what we know; following the most active 18 month stretch of their career, Slipknot will not be doing much of anything as a unit in 2006. But the variety of Knot-related side projects that first reared their metallic heads back in 2003, will be making a roaring comeback. Already Knot drummer Joey Jordison has discussed plans to get his "classic rock" side-project, the Murderdolls back into the studio, with a major U.S. tour to take place by next summer. Similarly, vocalist Corey Taylor has announced that his other band, Stone Sour (which also features Knot guitarist James Root) will be busy throughout the upcoming year with their own disc and tour. Don't be surprised if a variety of other "Slippery" side projects emerge in the not-too-distant future.
- P.O.D. The last few years haven't been a particularly easy time for the members of P.O.D. Once seemingly on the verge of superstardom, this San Diego-based rap/metal crew suffered a body blow when guitarist/songwriter Marcos Curiel left prior to the band beginning work on their most recent disc, 2003's Payable On Death— an effort that failed to light the expected degree of commercial fires. Since then the band has done some heavy soul searching and is expected to come roaring back when their next album, Testify, hits the mean streets early in 2006.
- GODSMACK: Godsmack reminded us all just how powerful a rock and roll force they are when their song *Bring it On* emerged as the break-out track on the 2006 version of *Madden Football*. It's not like this band's legion of supporters really needed that kind of reminder; they *know* this band still has what it takes to score big in the hard rock world. But after the slowest year in the band's history in 2005, that song was a not-so-gentle reminder that this Boston-based hard rock unit plans to amp things up big-time in the year ahead. Expect Sully Erna and the boys to be at the hub of all the year's metal action—especially on the road.
- TOOL: Trying to figure out Maynard James Keenan is strangely akin

to attempting to decipher the mysteries of life. But after spending the better part of 2004 and early 2005 with his "other" band, A Perfect Circle, Keenan returned to the rock and roll "mother ship" Tool, in mid-year to begin working with that group on their first album in over three years. While trying to seriously speculate about *anything* that this creepy/crawly unit may do is a dangerous endeavor, those at Tool's record label would be highly disappointed if they didn't have a new disc to promote at some point during '06. Then expect a massive world-wide tour to follow.



- GUNS N' ROSES: Guns N' Whoses? Oh, yeah. Them. It seems like each year at this time we write excitedly about the possibility of a new Guns N' Roses album in the year ahead. After all, hasn't Axl Rose been working on a disc called **Chinese Democracy** since the turn of the Millennium? Well, in all honesty, we have no more idea than you do whether or not Mr. Rose will finally deem his latest work worthy of public consumption in 2006. But we figure that if we keep printing items like this year-after-year, eventually we're most likely gonna be right!
- MARILYN MANSON: These days it seems as if Marilyn Manson views himself more as a budding Big Screen prodigy than as a true rock and roll icon. MM will be seen in a variety of theatrical projects throughout 2006, including a series of self-produced short films (in which he'll also star) that seem destined to keep the "festival crowds" buzzing. But what's this all mean for Manson's rock and roll career? Apparently he's grown tired of what he views as the increasing commercialization of his music, where he asserts, record labels treat releases as "product" rather than as "art." Until this changes, it appears as if Manson's focus will unfortunately remain on the film world rather than on making new rock and roll music.

Amid rampant industry speculation that vocalist Chad Gray, guitarist Greg Tribbett, bassist Ryan Martinie and drummer Matt with their monosyllabic stage names, trade mark makeup and outrageous costumes, the success of their latest disc, **Lost and Found** has quickly and effectively silenced all such talk Throw into the musical mix

fans-the answer proved to be a resound-

"We know that some of the fans won-dered what we were doing and why we were doing it," McDonough said. "However, we felt confident that not only could we make this kind of transition work, but that within a few months fans would only think of us in

The fact is, no matter how you may think of Mudvayne— 2005's back-to-metallic-basics unit or the alien-invasion force of

In fact, not only did Mudvayne walk and outrageous appearance. People either "got it"... or they didn't, it was that simple. And when the band followed up that initial success with their gold-selling sophomore effort, The End of All Things to Come, it seemed that the entire metal world was indeed this unit's oyster. But less than a year after that disc was released amid a flurry of magazine covers and MTV reports, the band abruptly and rather surprisingly did an about-face, deciding to radically alter

# STAN BILLINGS

this Midwestern metal unit's awe-inspiring performances at last summer's *Ozzfest* (where they co-starred along-side the likes begin to realize that despite the superficialyet-significant changes that have occurred within the Vayne universe, at its core the band's unique musical ethic is still very much in place.

"Anyone who ever believed that we were just the theatrics and just the makeup was obviously wrong," Gray said. "We were totally focused this time in proving that it was the music that was, and is, the true magic of Mudvayne. Some people resisted that notion, not within the band because we all saw the purpose of doing this. But there were those out there fans and people in the business— who thought we were crazy to throw away something that we had developed so well. But once we did, I think everyone saw the true plan come into

That "true plan" included a virtual reintroduction of Mudvayne to the metal mass-es. With everyone's focus now squarely on the band's musical skills rather than on their circus-like trappings, it was left to this determined quartet to show that they had both the licks and the smarts to pull off such a bold move. The "smarts" were never really an issue, since the band's past two discs, 2000's L.D. 50 and 2002's The End of All Things to Come, were both among efforts of all-time. But the "licks" part

yesteryear— there's no denying the impact this Illinois-based unit has had upon modern metal times. With their latest video, Happy, bringing even more converts into the Vayne fold, it appears that the gamble this fearless foursome took by dropping their most obvious rock and roll accounterments has begun to pay off... and pay off BIG! Indeed, this is one unit that has come a looong way to reach their present position in the hard rock hierarchy. Let's not forget that back in Y2K when Mudvayne arose in the wake of the initial wave of Slipknot-mania, they were the band that appeared best prepared to take the Shock Rock movement to the next logical level of public awareness. Their debut disc, L.D. 50, sold a highly respectable number, and the surprisingly cerebral approach utilized by the rockers then known as Spag, Gurrg, Ryknow and Kud made metal fans around the world aware that there was more to this facepainted unit than their wild-and-crazy look. MUCH more!

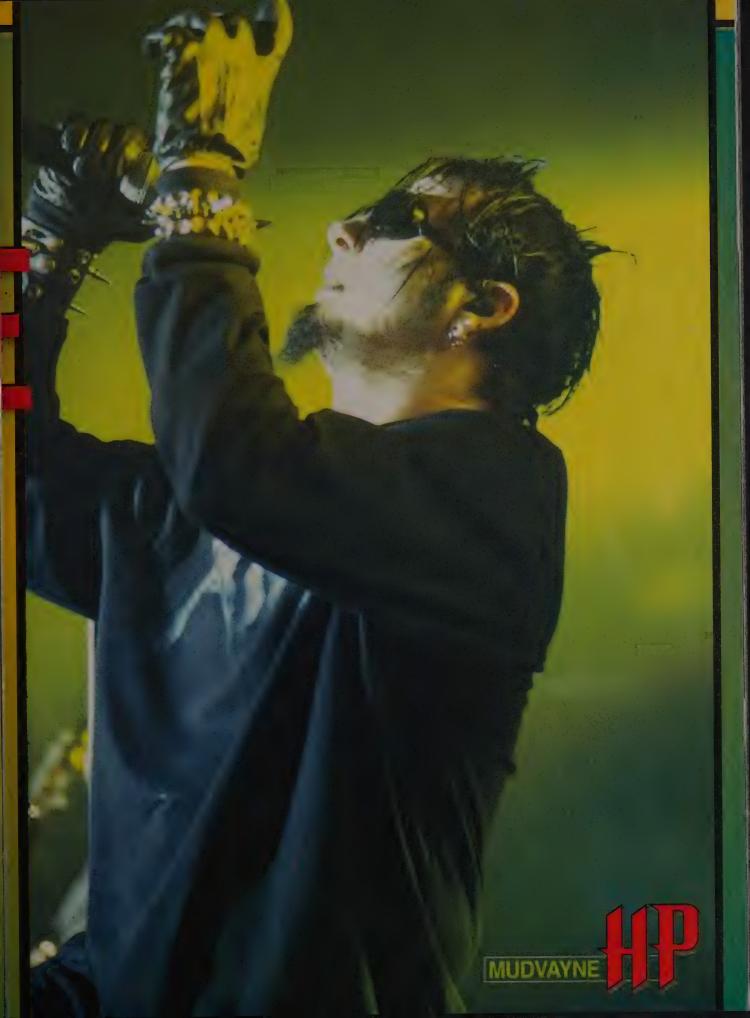
"It's very strange looking back on all that now," Gray said. "I know it sounds like a cliche, but when the first album came out we really didn't know what to expect. We always felt that it was a good album, and we believed there would be a market for what we were doing. But who really knows how things are going to go? You never know for sure if the record label is going to do every-thing they can to support it, or if radio, the way you would hope. All you can do is pour your heart into the music and then hope for the best. Thankfully, it worked for us and opened a lot of doors."

their appearance and turn public attention back upon their music. And with Lost and Found that's exactly what they did. But rather than treading on the time-tested musical soil presented on their highly respected earlier efforts, this time around the men of Mudvayne have gone in an even more radical, mind-bending and unexpected musical direction.

"We loved the idea that we were doing something that so many people thought was crazy," Gray said. "That's at the heart of what we always try to do. But it wasn't as if the decision to drop the makeup was a conscious thought on our part. It's just something that happened over the course of time. When you're on the road— as we werewith a band like Metallica, you understand that the way you look isn't anywhere near as important as the quality of the music you

"There are a lot of people in the media who never like it when a band tries to do something a little different... especially when it's kind of extreme," McDonough added. Those people always saw the make-up and they heard the volume, and they immediately tended to lump us together with other bands—and then try to dismiss us. They were never comfortable with what we were doing, and perhaps they shouldn't have been. This has never been 'comfortable' music. But to dismiss us, or an entire movement for that matter, is insane, Listen to the new music. Judge it for what it is we look a little different today than we did a few years ago—but the message and the power of the music is still there."

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f anyone is living proof of the old adage that anything boys can do, girls can do just as well or better, it's Arch Enemy lead singer Angela Gossow. She's got a cascade of blonde hair, fine cheekbones, and she's small of stature but her body is toned like someone who weight trains on a daily basis. But when she gets on that stage...she turns into a possessed demon with all the qualities of your typical male metal frontman. She barks, she howls, she growls and it's almost as though her eyes roll back into her head and she becomes a testosterone driven rock and roll animal. On **Doomsday Machine**, her third album with Arch Enemy (their earlier records were helmed by a man named Johan Liiva), Gossow has gotten even more feral, more masculine, and even less concerned with her gender. She's howling and barking at the moon as though she were Ozzy's heir apparent. But lest we forget, Arch Enemy are also anchored by the riffs of Michael Amott, who is romantically involved with Miss Gossow, is the guitar yin to Gossow's vocal yang. They're a perfect fit, and **Doomsday Machine** is a clinic of melodically tinged Swedish metal. We spoke with Miss Gossow while she had a rare day off. anyone is living proof of the old adage that anything boys can do, girls can do

You're working on your day off, doing interviews.

A day off means cleaning the bus, doing laundry, and doing interviews, so we don't really have days off!

Do you think that the press pays too much attention to the fact that you are a female? Yes, that is why everyone wants to talk to me. Every request is for me, and I say "no" about 50% of the time. It's boring to do interviews. There are 5 people in the band, and I don't write the music! If you want to know about the music, you should talk to the songwriters in addition to the vocalist. Like Nightwish, most people don't talk to Tarja, the singer She doesn't really say anything about the music or how it has evolved, and it is the same in Arch Enemy. If you want to know about the guitar work, you're asking the wrong person!

Do you feel like a spokeswoman for women in this metal scene? Do you like that role? I don't feel like a spokesperson. Everyone is an individual, and I'm not the one to be speaking for all women! There are a lot of women out there, and most are strong enough to speak up for themselves! I've become a spokeswoman unintentionally, because people ask me general questions about being a woman in metal, so I am speaking about something not spoken about much. I am a metal musician, and I see myself as that. Being female doesn't come first for me. I don't like that role. It's not one I've taken up. Otep does that; that's her thing. I see people as individuals. Some women

"There are a lot of women out there, and most are strong speak up for themselves!"

musicians are good, some suck. Do you think that metal fans might be wary of Arch **Enemy because** there is a woman in the lead role? Oh yeah. That's what happened at Ozzfest. That was their first introduction. It's a chick singer, that is what they see! That's what makes us different from other bands. When you are at the festival,

there is music blasting all day, and the only

We have gotten far by writing the music we like, and we continue that with every album. We don't look left, right and center for the trends or towards what is radio difference is seeing the girl on stage, despite friendly. We rehearse together, we live in TAKING



BY AMY SCIARRETTO

the intricate differences of the music. You know how men are; visuals come first! [Laughs]. It depends on the day! It's not like every day I have men in the crowd looking at me. I'm not extremely extroverted. I have private days.

Does that make your job harder? I'm not introverted. I'm just not super extroverted, and I'm not doing it for the sake of being in the spotlight. I love the music and I love the band, and I have to consciously get into the role of being the singer. I don't crave the feeling to always be on stage. When I was 20 or so, I did crave it. Now I am more relaxed, and I just enjoy playing music, and that is why I go onstage. I would like a dark stage, so you can just hear the music! I don't like the bright lights, but because I'm sweating like crazy on stage! I am totally sweaty after 30 minutes.

Tell me something about Arch Enemy that I wouldn't know from looking at a picture or listening to the music...

the same area, we jam a lot, we write new songs, record them and see if they are good enough to make it onto the album. The last album was stripped down, and this has more guitar solos. There is so much metalcore out there these days, and we know we are good musicians, and having good guitar work is key. For this record, we had the vocals step back It's like you guys are saying, "We know you guys see we have a female singer" and respond to that by letting the solos flow and have the music take the lead role over the vocals.

We're not silly. We are a bit older, and we take it easy on the road. We're not partying hard or leading a crazy life. There is no crazy stuff going on. On Ozzfest, we played at 9 AM, a time when I am usually in my pajamas! Nowadays, we're all reading, and watching movies on the bus. I don't drink. I don't smoke. This is my job, and it is exciting, but my evenings are calm and we do the opposite

of what people think we're doing. Where does Doomsday Machine fit in the

Arch Enemy catalog?

It's a musical guitar clinic! Mike is playing a lot of solos. Metal has become so samesounding, and no one can play solos, so they put vocals everywhere to make up for that. Listen to old 70s rock, and it's 5 minutes of instruments and the vocals come in later. It's 5 equal instruments that need their space...that's how we are.

HIT PARADER 58





### HARD ROCK'S NEW STARS

BY: AMY SCIARRETTO

# STRETCH ARM STRONG

Stretch Arm Strong started out all the way back in 1992 as a part-time, weekend band. Several of the members had real jobs as teachers, as well as families, in their native South Carolina.

But the unscratchable itch, the burning passion, and the fervent desire to take Stretch Arm Strong to the next level welled up inside singer Chris McLane and his band mates. With that, they quit their jobs educating youth about history and English and set out for life in the tour van.

"It was the right decision," says McLane. "It sucks to be away from our kids and our families. Four of us are married, and two of us have kids, so it's hard. But we have to be driven to do the band. We put so much into it. If we stop now, what would it have been for?"

That's a hard question to ask, but the band asked it and never looked back. After making the commitment, SAS linked up with We Put Out Records, a label imprint. For a band that has built its reputation on DIY, for-the-kids work ethic, the switch from indie label Solid State to this situation was clearly the best choice. "You're always nervous, and always apprehensive at first, when you make moves," McLane says with candor. "Now, we go to shows, and see our posters, and see the street team handing out fliers for our record release, and when magazines and newspapers are calling you for interviews, and you show up to a town and you see a feature and a picture of your band in the local paper, it's amazing. We've never had that. And now we're seeing it as a standard. People are actively working as hard for our band as we are, and

you don't always see that."

He's right, you know. Many bands complain that they can't get the support from their record label, whether it's monetarily or promotion-based, but SAS feel that the world knows their new album, Free At Last, is out.

If you didn't know, well, we're here to educate you about the band. Free At Last is youthful and robust, and sounds like each member of SAS downed a case of Red Bull when they recorded it. When SAS perform, it's like each member downed two cases of Red Bull and chased them with two-liters of Jolt Cola! This is a band that puts one million percent into the live show. "A lot of bands have a lot going on, but for us, playing live in front of fans is always important and is a main component of what we do," the singer says. "Our last record, Engage, wasn't our best." McLane admits,

"Our last record, Engage, wasn't our best," McLane admits, recalling how SAS got from there to here. "A lot of our fans don't like it. And I don't know if we went back to place where we were mentally on our previous records, but we regained the energy and the passion of our older records." Free At Last captures the in-your-face hardcore of their much loved Rituals Of Life album and combines that with the melodic, hooky emotion of 2001's A Revolution Transmission.

McLane, who started out as SAS's bassist, not their singer, believes Free At Last is the best record of the band's decade-plus career. "It's aggressive and powerful emotionally," he says, encapsulating the record in a single sentence. The album's buoyant music and issue-conscious lyrics will make converts out of non-believers.

Stretch Arm Strong have truly arrived.





## NEVERMORE

Nevermore's Warrel Dane is leaving in three hours. He's about to hop on the tour bus and hit the road in support of his band's new album, **This Godless Endeavor**. At this point, he hasn't even packed. And by the time you read this story, Gigantour will be a fading summer memory. Nevertheless...

"I do everything last minute. There is too much crap to do, but I always make it," Dane says about his pre-touring rituals. "It's the matter

of putting clothes in the suitcase."

Suitcases aside, Nevermore's new album, **This Godless Endeavor** (Century Media), takes its name of a side project that Dane was going to do that never fleshed out. "It was me and a fellow guitar player in Seattle, but the project never came to fruition," the singer reveals. "The title was too good to waste. It became a Nevermore song, then the album title. Most people during their lives feel despondent, and they look around and see what's going on in the world, and think *this* is all there is. Everyone can identify with that."

Dane is a Seattle native, and he was there for the grunge boom of which Nevermore were not a part. They remained bubbling under the surface of the Seattle scene as a metal band, and they never 'went' grunge. "We supported ourselves through day jobs. I'm a chef, so I could get a job anytime I wanted to and I was able to leave those jobs for tours. This is what we loved to do, and no one was going to stop us. Living through those [grunge] years was crazy. People in the press are in a post-grunge depression! Metal doesn't get respect, and we get no respect here, and it's like who cares about the past? I don't!"

Grunge, like Gigantour, has come and gone, but Nevermore remain a heavy metal staple. Dane, with his waist-length blonde locks, has an expansive range, and can do the high pitched vocal wail without ever wandering into cheesy, overblown Dickinson-Halford territory, but he also uses a lower, deeper register not unlike Type O Negative's Peter Steele. "I'm a baritone, technically, but my range is broad, obviously, because I can sing high," Dane says. "I took a lot of voice training in my early years, and I learned how to use my instrument properly. On this record, I experiment with death metal style vocals, It's not very easy, I have new found respect for those vocalists. I love death metal, and that led me to experimentation here." This Godless Endeavor is progressive and strong, and the riffs are some of the best Nevermore have ever set to tape. "A lot of people think the last record was the 'angry' period for Nevermore, and the new album is the 'not so pissed off,' but we're still very angry but a bit more calm and reflective," muses Dane.

This Godless Endeavor may be less angry, but it's still an enthralling, thrilling listen.

### THE BLED

The Bled's James Munoz is in his native Tucson, Arizona, looking for a bar that's open. A friend has flown in from Milwaukee and they're looking to "start early. It's gonna be one of those days," the 22-year old singer laughs. Throughout our 20-minute interview with the handsome singer, it's apparent that he's a smart ass with a wry, sarcastic sense of humor, something that is often missing from bands in the current metalcore scene.

When we mention our enjoyment of Munoz's dessert-dry sense o' humor, he chuckles, and says, "I want to be a comedian when the Bled breaks up. I wanted to be a comedy writer before any of this. I wrote sitcom pilots," Unfortunately, none of his pilots got picked up, and hence, The Bled were born. Thanks to the melodyladen maelstrom on their new album, Found in The Flood (Vagrant





Records), The Bled have been embraced by the fevered kids in the metalcore scene.

"We make heavy music, but I think it's The Bled's own spin on heavy music. We don't rip off crappy bands, or our contemporaries," Munoz says about his band's style. "We take from bands like Yes and Pink Floyd. I don't listen to many new bands, because they don't strike me as awesome, as they do other people. 'Heavy' doesn't always mean metal riffs and screaming and chug and mosh parts."

We're inclined to agree with him on all points of his argument. The Bled aren't copying off their peers; they are just trying to make things a little fresher, a little newer. Being from Arizona, where the metal scene is decidedly less than burgeoning actually fosters creativity, as opposed to hampering it. When there's nothing to do to combat boredom, you make good music.

"When the five of us get together and write, it's different, because the Tucson scene doesn't have a lot going on. It's not like our big brother's have bands to look up to. There is no major city in the background to look to, either," Munoz says regarding The Bled's creative process.

For Found In The Flood, the band graduated from Fiddler Records, which released Pass The Flask, to ultra successful indie, Vagrant. It was a key move for The Bled, for their past, present,

and future. "We were in so much debt, being in this band. We're not making any money, and we're losing more, and getting in the hole even deeper. People don't realize being in a band is not all fun and games. You come home from tour and you owe someone 50 grand, and some guy wants to cut your throat because you wrecked a rented RV on the road." Working with a bigger label with more resources is helping The Bled get out of the money hole. But so is the high quality musicianship on Found in The Flood.

"We've polished off our individual craft. And our guitarists are actual guitarists now," Munoz deadpans. "I'm impressed when I listen to what they pull off, and I am so proud of them. We worked our asses off every day for 4 weeks, from noon till midnight and later. We'd get places in the song, and we'd listen to the song, and then hate it, and mess around with them. We'd take the weekends off, so when we came back on Monday, we'd generate new ideas. It was a collective effort."

And with that, Munoz is off to the watering hole with his Midwestern friend,

### DREDG

It's hard to believe that Bay Area band Dredg call major label

Self Titled Debut Full Length CD featuring the single "Deserver"

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Interscope – home to Nine Inch Nails, Gwen Stefani, and Eminem—home. Sure, on paper, the company looks like serious winners in the pop music sweepstakes, but every record company, regardless of size, has a small set of bands that don't sell a ton of records yet possess that special something that makes them cool and credible, and worthwhile of working hard to sell their records.

Dredg are one of those bands, and on their new album, Catch Without Arms, they traffic in proggy textures and off-kilter arrangements, but they inject every moment of their musical experimentation with genuine, human heart. You can't manufacture that element, and while precious few have caught on to Dredg, those who have caught on have stayed with the band.

"We thrive in the live setting, and I'd like to think our record offers a broad range of styles," says singer Gavin Hayes about his artistic output. "We were a heavier band in high school, but it was a natural progression to where we are now. From part to part or song to song... if you don't like the first three songs on our record, you will find something on song four, I guarantee it."

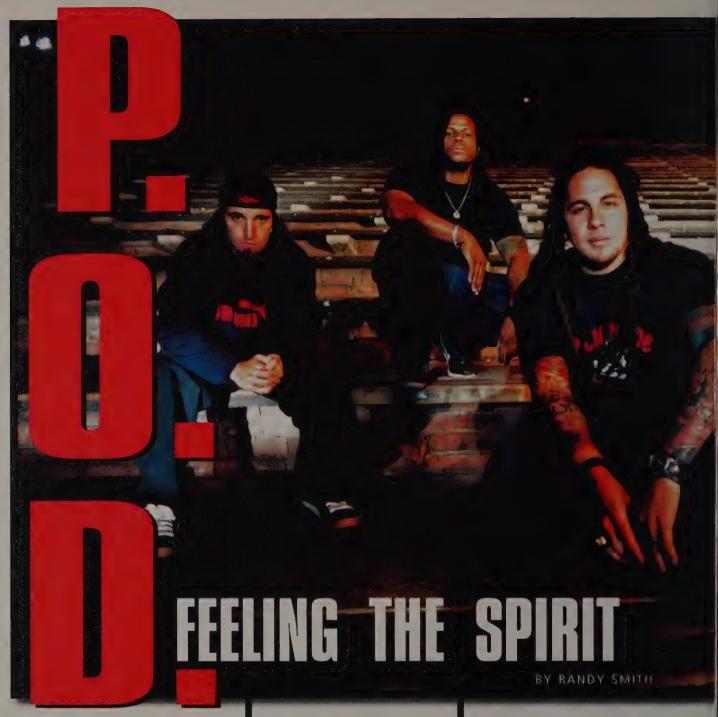
That's a bold statement for Hayes to make, but he backs it up on Catch Without Arms. The album has a serious vibe to it, but it never comes across as pretentious or humorless, like many bands of this ilk tend to project. "We take our music seriously, like it's our job, and we work really hard on everything from songwriting to production." Hayes says. "I guess we could get called pretentious but people who say that are pretentious themselves! People think we are serious but we are easy going and have fun and we get crazy and party really hard. We're normal every day people."

Normal every day people who back atypical, left of center rock

Normal every day people who back atypical, left of center rock music, that is. There are Zen-like moments all over **Catch Without Arms**. "People ask are all the time if we are Buddhist and or if meditate." Hayes laughs, from the truck stop where he is calling in for our interview. "I don't do that! We're just on the road and having

So, do yourself the favor and catch Dredg when they roll through your local town. You won't be disappointed.





ack in the spring of 2005, as the members of P.O.D. began work on their latest album, Testify, they approached the creative process with a bit of a chip on their shoulders. For the first time since their 1999 release, The Fundamental Elements of Southtown, had established this San Diego-based rap/metal unit as a platinum selling force on the hard rock scene, P.O.D. felt that they had something special to prove. Their previous disc, 2003's Payable On Death, was viewed by many as a bit of a commercial and artistic disappointment— at least in the wake of the breakout status enjoyed by the group's 2001 release, Satellite. So for vocalist Sonny, bassist Traa, drummer Wuv and guitarist Jason (who had replaced founding member Marcos just prior to the recording of the

band's last disc), the release of their latest album represented a chance for the band to not only prove their growing legion of doubters wrong, but to also further vindicate the surprisingly upbeat attitudes that have always stood at the core of this unit's work.

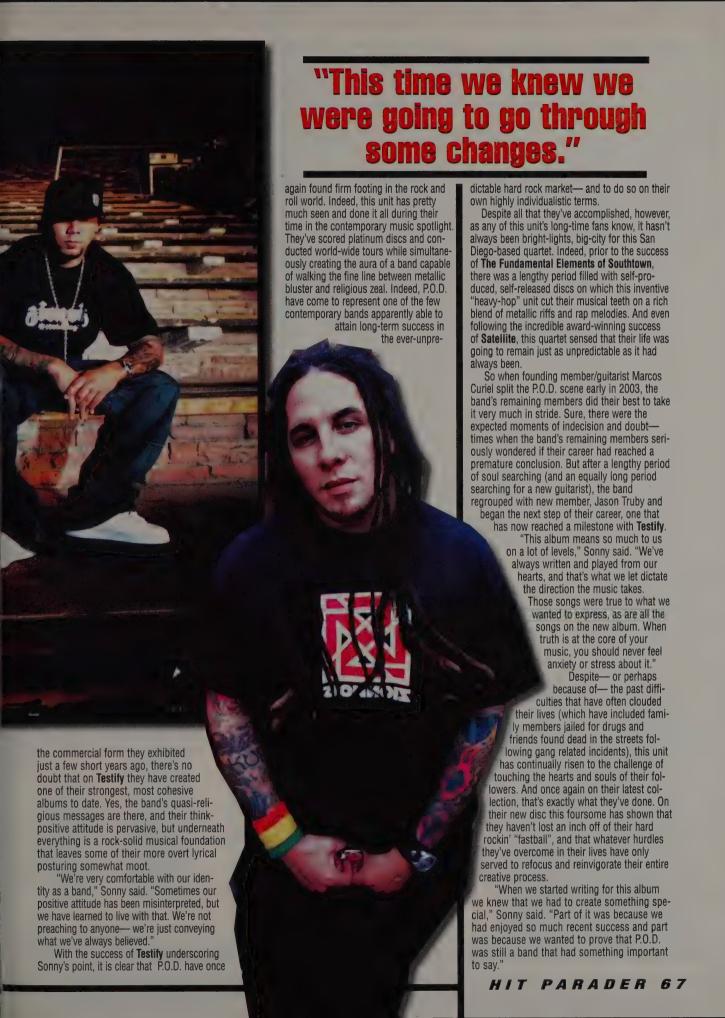
"We approach every album basically the same way— at least in terms of our attitude," Sonny said. "This time we knew there were going to be some changes since we were working with a new producer (Glen Ballard) and with some different goals in mind. The results have been even better than we could have hoped for."

been even better than we could have hoped for."
Working with the Grammy Award-winning
Ballard seemed to do just the trick for P.O.D.
Throughout **Testify** the band's renowned ability
to mix street-tough hip-hop sensibilities with
heavy, guitar-driven rock is showcased as never

before. The disc's first single, *Roots in Stereo*, provides an indication of the confidence this unit still possesses— and the chances they're still willing to take. Featuring guest vocals by Hasidic reggae artist Matisyahu, the song stands alongside such previous band efforts as *Youth of the Nation* and *Boom* as tunes designed the push both the sonic and cultural boundaries of the contemporary music world.

"One of the things we wanted to do on this album was work with people that we admired," Sonny said. "Matisyahu is one of those people. He brought so much energy and such a great vibe into the studio that he helped make *Roots in Stereo* come alive. That's a philosophy at the very core of this album."

While some industry observers continue to question whether or not P.O.D. can ever regain



poter Ward has never been particularly shy about discussing his aspirations. He's long believed that his band. Cold, possessed the artistic quality and the rock and not says, to make a major meression on the contemporary music world. Yet despite coming "test" close to big time success on a number of decasions this Florida based unit— which in addition to vocalist Ward learness bassist Jerebry Marshall, drummer, Sam McCandless, and new guitarist Matt Loughain. has been vigived by many as an "outsider" in the race for break-out status. But with the release of the bund's utest disc. A Different Kind of Pain chair first for

very dark, and this one was as well. But I think we did it after the hard bottomed out. It was about healing cather than anything else. A bit had to did with with was going our in my life at the time, but it also but pole with the state of the band. Making this allows was a life danging expenence for all of to."

With the died is liest another. The period of the fundamental processors and follow up tracks like another. The God's some and Base flowers are the bands musical power and diversity, there's no question that A Different Kind of Pain represents a major step servered for Cold. Following as it deed also uses a size. The

ide into perspective for me, it made me think about how fortunate I was to be healthy and doing something that I really enjoyed. But then a lot more happened to me on both a personal and professional level. It all changed my attitude when it came to writing for this album.

As one can tell from his words. Want isn't about to get overly excited when he hears popular belief that things are about to break wide-open for Cold, After all the's been here before. Over much of the last decade, he's continually been told that Gold are on the verge of becoming hard rocks, "next big thing" only to end up desuppointed. and disulfusioned. Indeed, it has been this mint's ability to delive into the darker recesses of the human condition that have distinguished their previous albums—Cold: 13 Ways to Bleet Onstage along with the praviously mentioned Year of the Spider and samed the band's band rock stopes. But while they we clearly maintained many of their traditional lyrical perspectives on their latest disc, there's also an unmistakable — albeit subduce — agra of optimism that has pervaded many of Cold's new sorigs. As the rock community has begun to embrace the impassioned, heavy-yet-melodic strains found on the group's falest album. Ward and his bandmales seem assured of a

Have no problem with letting everyone know that I want them to buy this album," Ward said: "What's the point of denying that? We've worked hard-made a yery good album, and now we want people to hear if. We're still struggling with our car payments and to find houses we can afford. So success is a very variable thing for the



members of this famil. When you've been something of an underdog throughout your career, and then you suddenly start sensing that a lot of people are catching on to what you're doing, it can be a little intimidating. But We lave it!"

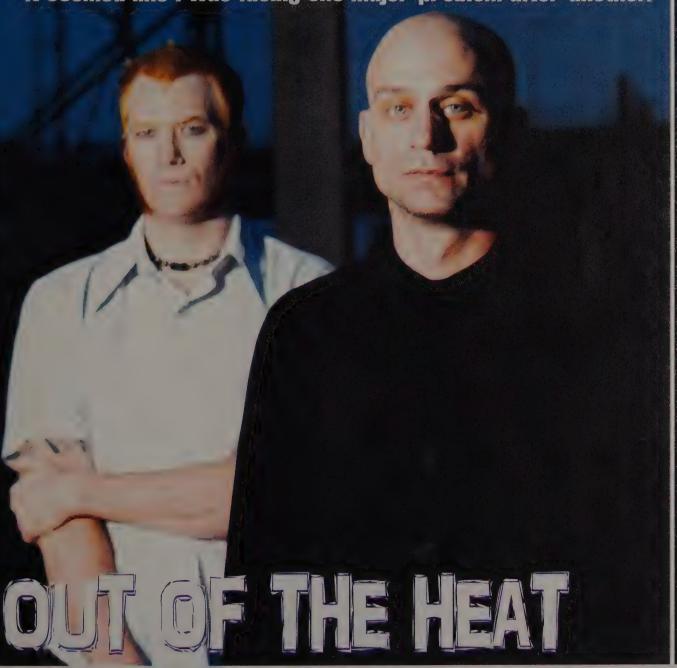
It would now appear out the sumess of Colds latest disc may indeed change the world's perspective on this powerful emotive act. For many, Ward and his makes how from to use under the clock of relative and procedure to use the colds of relative and the sumes. — Whom to varying degrees, have masked Cold's visceral impact on the hard rock scene. But with A Different Kind of Pain. Cold appear quite determined to change that perception. While such comparisons are all but nevitable to cartain narrow-minded members of the metal community, even a single isten to this units fourth that is a quote to every early one with ears that Cold are insisted a band apart. In sayle, sound and attitude, this quotet have make and to relative make the cold are insisted as one of the hard rock scenes most diverse and talented units.

It is tought to live up to the expectations some people have for you. "Want said." The best we can do so the stry to pease considers and hope that it amend went.

tanists forcy Balsamo (now with Evanoscence) and kelly Hayes. In came Loughran, who was originally in the group in the mid-90s when they were still down.

Larindia and were battling for recognition in their home state of Florida. But now with their newfold guitarist firmly in place. Gold appear ready, within and able to lasse all potential challenges placed in their home state of Florida. But now with their newfold guitarist firmly in place. Gold appear ready, within and able to lasse all potential challenges placed in their path. With their lasest disc providing to be the fastest selling album of their career, it courses as if the placed that have not drawn about them. There's a much more fundamental element to the music when it is cramate.

"It seemed like I was facing one major problem after another."



# "We've taken everything about this band to a higher plateau."

t's been a time of change for Sevendust- a first-time-ever change in their lineup, a change in their record labels, even a change in their sound. With the addition of former Snot guitarist Sonny Mayo (who replaces band stalwart Clint Lowery now part of Dark New Day), and the release of their latest disc, **Next**, on their own major-distributed label, this is clearly one of the most intriguing periods in this Atlanta-based unit's long career. And it's quite apparent that Sevendust— vocalist Lajon Witherspoon, guitarists Mayo and John Connelly, drummer Morgan Rose and bassist Vinnie Hornsby-have embraced the challenges presented by their various career changes with a surprising degree of relish.

"Every time you can try something

want to do, and this album reflects that. It's obvious from Witherspoon's

It's obvious from Witherspoon's words that during their eight-year run within the had rock world. Sevendust have learned a lot. They've learned what to do and conversely what not to do. In order to best promote both their music and themselves. But despite all that they've absorbed, perhaps the paramount lesson that these emotive hard rockers have learned is that no matter what you do, what you say and what you think, things never stay the same, dust when you begin to believe you may have a comfortable handle on one aspect of your life or your career, the shifting winds of tate may bring unexpected opportunities or unwanted problems right to your front door— in the process, totally messing with both one's plans and mind. But for

inside of you," Witherspoon said. "That's one of the great things about being a musician; you have a natural outlet for a lot of the tensions and troubles that you experience. I don't know how people who don't have an outlet like that manage to make it through the day. It's been so important for me to have music as an outlet. It's a great feeling to be able to put your emotions into words and then express them through the music we make."

Their special ability to put their fears, dreams and ambitions, as well as those of their fans, into song has been one of the trademark achievements of Sevendust's musical reign. Once again on **Next**, this unit has put their incredible "feel" for their audience on full display. Whether it's a full-throttle metallic roar,

# SEVENDUST BEASON TO BELIEVE

g,"

BY ROGER MOYERS

the Dust, dealing with such scenarios
he hand wasn't

new, it can be very exciting," Witherspoon said. "Obviously, having someone like Clint leave the band wasn't easy for us— we've been in this fight together for a long time. But once Sonny came in, he brought so much energy and enthusiasm that it just lifted us to a higher musical plateau. He had us realize all over again exactly why we love this band so much."

One of the key realizations sparked by Mayo's arrival was the band's desire to return to the heavier sound that marked their groundbreaking earlier discs such as Sevendust, Home and Animosity. It's not that the band didn't like the more relaxed and introspective approach featured on their more recent effort, Seasons, but they realized that the primal roar that for so long stood as this band's trademark was running the risk of losing its bite. So when it came time to begin recording Next in earnest, the band members sharpened their claws, and turned their amps back up to "10". The results, as heard on such songs as Hero, Pieces and Silence, show that the Dust are clearly back to doing what they do best.
"There is a certain type of song that

we've grown to recognize as a Sevendust song," Witherspoon said. "That's not to say that some of the softer things that we've done over the years still aren't near and dear to our hearts. But I think we now know better than ever exactly what we

has become almost second nature.

"There have been a number of times during our career that we've each had to go through a period of soul searching and reevaluation." Lowery said. "This has been one of those period. It's been more to do with us as a band than with us as individuals, but the net effect has been pretty much the same. It's allowed us to open up even more, and that comes across in all of the songs on this album. But instead of getting kind of introspective, as we've done at times in the past, it's all caused us to rock out even harder than before."

Harden indeed! The simple fact of the matter is that on Next this livesome has taken another major step towards cementing their stellar credentials in the contemporary music world. On their fifth outing, the Dust brigade have seemingly pulled out all the stops in their efforts to deliver an emotion filled, energy-packed hard rock showcase. But, as Lowery indicated, unlike so many of their hard rocking brethren, Sevendust aren't scaned to push even harder on the metal pedal when the need arises, and the powerful results they achieve mark them as one of the most diverse, talented and hency bands around.

Each album presents a very special opportunity for you to unburden a lot of the things that have been rattling around

or a more subdued rocker, the Dust brothers deliver the musical goods with uncanny elan and unerring accuracy. Now in the wake of all their recent changes, it should be most intriguing to see what kind of reaction their latest disc can garner within the hard rock hierarchy. Particularly fascinating will be to note if the album can finally take this multi-taiented, multi-racial and multi-dimensional band to the next level of success.

From the days when their self-titled debut disc was released in 1997, it was widely speculated that the Dust would soon emerge as one of the most significant and successful bands of the New Metal era. And while their subsequent efforts have each attained gold sales status, the band has so-far failed to attain the stellar heights long believed to be their destiny. Will their latest release prove to be the effort that serves to break through these commercial barriers? As Witherspoon knows only-too-well, only time— and an often fickle rock and roll audience— will tell.

"I've given up on trying to guess how well an album of ours might do," he said. "Each time we release a new one, we think 'This is the one!' And they have all been successful to a certain degree. But we know there's so much more that can be accomplished, and we think on this album we've done just about everything we can to try and make that kind of success a reality."





# A FRESH STAR

th the release of their new album, See You On the Other Side, Korn has launched the next chapter of their already legendary career. Recording for the first time as a fourpiece following the departure last year of long-time guitarist Brian "Head" Welch, remaining members Jonathan Davis (vocals), James "Munky" Shaffer (guitar), Fieldy (bass) and David Silveria (drums) have created one of their most challenging and thought-provoking collections. Working with a variety of non-traditional producers, the band has assembled a diverse and compelling disc, one that stands up to the historic legacy created by such earlier efforts as Life is Peachy, Korn and Follow the Leader. Recently we spoke to Davis about the band's new album, its internal changes. and its plans for the future.

Hit Parader: It seemed as if a bit more prevaration went into this album

Jonathan Davis: It's hard to say whether or not more preparation went into it. Let's just say that we took all the time we needed to make sure it was what we wanted it to be as a complete album. This is a very important album for us because it represents the start of a new working relationship with a new label and our first album since we lost a member.

JD: It's like we're a new band... certainly a different band. I think one of the things that happened after he left is that everyone else realized that we'd need to take our efforts to the next level in order to compensate. We sensed that we'd all need to focus more and really kick our game up a notch. The best thing for us is that we did it, and we're thrilled because of it. We've effectively reinvented ourselves as a band on this album.

JD: Of course. He had been with us for so long. He always brought a lot of energy into the band. He probably told more jokes than any of us... miss that. But he had his problems, he really wasn't focused on music for the last three years. And if doing his thing with religion is making him happy, that's all that matters. I haven't talked to him since he left the band because his Christian beliefs and some of my beliefs are in conflict, but he's still like a brother to me.

JD: So far... so good. We have the kind of deal that we were looking for, one where we have almost complete autonomy, yet have the label provide the kind of support we need. It's a very interesting deal; we now own 70% of our albums. Maybe now I can make some money from these records we make. In some ways we've done things that no other band has ever tried to do. Now maybe some of them will try and do it.

HP: We know that you of good family Orays, in a district of the

JD: Nah, that's not where it's at. We'll see where that goes, but right now we're not into naming anyone as a permanent member of the band. We're in no rush to do that. We knew that when we played live the last thing we wanted to do was rely on samples or anything like that, so having another guitarist was essential. But he didn't even appear on stage with us- he was there to fill a role, and that was it.

JD: We didn't want to limit ourselves in any way. In the past we generally worked with just one producer on an album, and he was always a rock guy who had worked with a lot of bands that has roughly similar approaches. This time we just wanted to shake things up, so we started working with a lot of different producers, taking the best from this one and the best from that one. A key thing is that we wrote with those guys as well. That really gave a different twist to our sound.

JD: Yeah, we did a lot of work with them, and they just stood out from everyone else both as writers and as producers. They've wanted to work with a heavier band for a long time, so we were good for them, and they were good for us. At first we didn't think there was any way that we'd be able to work together because our backgrounds and approaches are so different. But we tried to keep an open mind, and once we started to hear some of the stuff that they could do, we were totally convinced.

JD: I don't know if we really relinquished anything-- it was more like we redirected some of our energy. The Matrix allowed us to do things in a totally different way. Instead of each going off and writing songs, we'd

all get together and jam. They'd record it, go play with what we had done, and then come back to us with sections of the jam that they had put together into a basic song structure. Then we'd play around with what they had given us, and before too long we had a new song. It was amazing.

roed as See You On the Other Side at one time wa heard the album was come to be called Politics, then Souvenir of Sadness What became of mose

JD: Picking an album title is never an easy thing for us. We usually have a list a mile long and then slowly begin to narrow it down. As you know, both of the titles you mentioned are songs on this album, so they were prime candidates, but they just didn't hit us as album titles.

visches do vot expect to include in

JD: That's always hard to say. Obviously we want to feature a lot of this material because we think it's great. But at the same time, we know that fans come to hear the songs they like, and we don't want to disappoint them. At this point in our career, with so many albums done, it becomes a real challenge to put together a set that reflects what we want to do and what the fans want us to do. But it can be done.. and it will be done.

JD: At times it's kind of surreal to me. I look back over all the time, and all the hardships we've gone through, and I see that we're still here, and still doing something interesting with the music we make. I've always admired Metallica for that reason. They've been around a lot longer than us, but they always challenge themselves and their fans. That's our goal too.

HIT PARADER 73



ach month we bring you an incredible feature direct from the voluminous Hit Parader vault— an article that appeared on these hallowed pages exactly ten years ago! Without changes, editing or updates, these stories provide an amazing glimpse into this thing we call rock and roll, dealing with the form's most famous— and in some cases, infamous— stars. So direct from our Jan, 2005 issue is this "vintage" interview with the inimitable Iron Maiden.

It's been a looong time since we last heard from Iron Maiden— and much has happened in the world of this classic '80s heavy metal band since the release of their last album, A Live One, back in 1992. First off, as many of you may remember, the group's long-time vocalist, Bruice Dickinson, decided to leave the band in 1993, sparking Maiden's worldwide search for a new frontman. Hundreds of audition tapes were received from aspiring singers hailing from all corners of Planet Earth. Yet when decision time finally came in 1994, band stalwarts Steve Harris (bass), Dave Murray (guitar), Nicko McBrain (drums) and Janeck Gers (guitar) decided to stick close to their British roots, selecting former Wolfsbane vocalist Blaze Bayley to fill Dickinson's rock and roll shoes

Rather than allowing the band to ease back into their well-rehearsed recording and touring pattern, however, the hiring of Bayley was to prove to be the catalyst for a tumuluous period of transition for the Maiden Metal Machine. While they quickly moved into a writing and recording mode with their new vocalist aboard, the band was both shocked and surprised to discover that their State-side record label wasn't exactly bursting at the seams to release new Iron Maiden material. Always a somewhat stubborn and arrogant lot, the Maiden boys had apparently never bothered to notice—or care—that the rock world had gone through some heady and heavy changes since their brand of dinosaur rock ruled the earth. In their minds, the release of a new Maiden disc was still frontpage news from New York to New Guinea.

After recovering from their initial shock, the band began conferring with a gamut of other American labels, seeing which would most like to have the honor of working the band's latest magnum opus, The X Factor.

Maiden finally decided to follow the path of least resistance (as well as least money) by signing with CMC Records, the Carolinabased label that due to its recent signings of such '80s stalwarts as Warrant, Yngwie Malmsteen, Slaughter and Motorhead has become known in some rock circles as the label "where metal bands go to die." Still, band founder/leader Harris believes that despite what some nay-sayers may want to believe about Iron Maiden, there's still plenty of life left in this venerable metal war horse.

"Iron Maiden is still very capable of producing the kind of music that millions of fans around the world still enjoy," the bassist said. "I'd like people to realize that despite what may be happening musically in America, the rest of the world continues to embrace what they consider to be the classic hard rock style. Maiden is bigger than ever in Japan, South America and Europe, and with a new vocalist working with us, we're as excited as we've ever been about what the future holds."

Maiden's "America is just another market" attitude is certainly nothing new for these quintessential British bashers. Even at the height of their mid-'80s popularity, when such albums as Number Of The Beast and Powerslave were selling millions both in the U.S. and abroad, Maiden would- much to their credit— always emphasize the fact that they were a European act, and spend a healthy portion of their touring time hauling gear through venues throughout England and the Continent-including then-still-Communist nations like Czechoslovakia and Hungary. At a time when such contemporaries as Def Leppard chose to virtually forego their British roots in favor of focusing full-time on the lucrative American market, Iron Maiden always viewed themselves as a true band of the world. That attitude has now

begun to pay hefty dividends, for as their fortunes fade on this side of the Big Pond, they remain arena-packing legends virtually everywhere else

"Believe it or not, there are still some places that we're just getting around to playing for the first time," Harris explained. "There are so many places where kids love rock music that it's virtually impossible to get to everywhere. And during the 16 years that we've been together, new markets—especially in Asia and South America—have opened up. A band could spend six months on the road now without playing North America or Europe at all. That's amazing to me."

Yet, with Bayley aboard and their new album out, Maiden are far from ready to throw in the towel and give up on certain parts of the world. They remain confident



that as soon as both long-time supporters and new fans get a chance to grow comfortable with such new tracks as Xand X, they'll realize that no one else in contemportary music can deliver the kind of double-barrled knockout punch that has long been Iron Maiden's trademark. There are reasons that a band manages to sell more than 15 million albums during their career, and is widely considered one of the premier heavy metal band of all time, and on **The X Factor**, Maiden show those reasons loudly and clearly.

"We're very excited about this album,"
Harris said. "Not only is it our first album in
a number of years, as well as our first with
Blaze, but it's also one of the best we've ever
done on a number of levels. There's a depth
and passion to each track that
I think the fans will hear and appreciate. It

will take fans a few listens to really get into this one— it's not a blatantly commercial album. Blaze really worked hard to not only fit into the band, but also to bring some exciting new elements into the group; he succeeded on both counts."

But, understandably, despite Bayley's varied contributions, what many long-time Maiden fans already want to know is if there's any chance that at some point in the future the band would consider reteaming with the leather-lunged Dickinson on a project? While Harris quickly dismisses the notion, in order to both protect Bayley and focus attention on the band's latest project, he doesn't cast the expected daggers at the group's departed vocalist. After all, if any "revenge" towards their ex-frontman was in Maiden's collective mind, they certainly received a halthy dose of it when

Dickinson's first solo project, **Balls To Picasso**, failed to light any commercial fires
upon its release early in 1995. So maybe
two years after Dickinson's unexpected
departure, some of the old wounds have
begun to heal.

"I'd rather just say that we're all very pleased to have Iron Maiden just the way it is now," Harris said. "Bruce did what he felt he had to do, and we did we we needed to do. I don't believe there were really any hard feelings on either side. We haven't spoken since his departure but I'm sure we wish each other the best. But as far as getting together again goes...no, I don't see that happening. Iron Maiden has gone through so many changes over the years; at last count we've had something like 24 members since we first got together. You can never look back; the future is really all that matters."



For 17 years Mike Greenblatt was the editor of Metal Maniacs magazine. During that time he was in constant contact with the metal musicians who inhabit the outer extremes of the hard rock world. Now he brings his voluminous knowledge—as well as his deft writing skills—to the pages of Hit Parader.—Ed.

At All Cost comes from Austin, Texas and they're fit to bursting with extreme musical ideas co-opted from the likes of Killswitch Engage, Darkest Hour and Unearth. Their rather satanic vocalist, Andrew Collins, sounds like he's undergoing an exorcism in the recording studio. Either that or he's channeling Dani of Cradle Of Filth. Doesn't matter, though, 'cause **It's Time To Decide** has enough different kinds of sound to sustain its 13 tracks (the congas and bongos on "Noches Desesperadas" are worth the price of admission alone). Sounds like these boys have been crossing that Texas border and enjoying some of those madhouse Mexicali nights! (Hope they go light on the mescal). These days, it's not enough to take from Black Metal or the much-maligned Metalcore subgenre, or that cool Thrash/Death Metal tandem so many young bands prefer. You've got to add some kind of individualistic stamp, and, At All Cost keeps it real by never getting into any one rut. Just as you're fed up with Collins' caterwauling, in comes some clean melody-mongering. Then, when you think you have the whole thing figured out, they go all jazz-rock fusion on "It Burns Black," complete with violin solo. The album ends by asking that apt musical question, "What Is Left To Inspire?" It's a beautifully constructed piece of folksy calm (after their preceding storm) centering around fiddle and lovely acoustic guitar. At All Cost goes off in so many directions that it's akin to the early days of free-form FM when radio wasn't so tightly controlled by commercial playlists. Just like you never know what you're going to hear when you borrow a friend's Ipod mix, **It's Time To Decide** gives you that same versatility in the guise of a metal band. These boys are smart. And they point to a healthy new direction for young bands: eccentric eclecticism, a genre-hopper of magnetic proportions like clowns coming out of a Volkswagon or a phone booth at the circus.

The newly reconstructed Combat Records is taking a chance on these dudes and if the label's track record is any indication, so should listeners. Combat, you may remember, originally unearthed the deviltry of Venom, Exodus, Megadeth and Dark Angel. They're been dormant of late but like a vampire sleeping for 100 years before rising to wreak havoc, Combat's back. Its other two 2005 finds, by the way, are a Tennessee band called LOOK WHAT I DID whose Minuteman For The Moment sounds like something borne from an unholy alliance of Dead Kennedys and Dillinger Escape Plan; and HORSE THE BAND, whose The Mechanical Hand uses hardcore as its base before getting all bi-polar.

You'd think a band with a name like **Battlemore** who dresses like Vikings and is from Finland would sound like a cheesy power metal group. Wrong! **Third Age Of The Sun** is a wonderful record with that vocal dichotomy between the low-voiced male growler and the high-voiced beautiful female. Along the way there's chugging heaviness amidst a complex production by Terje Refsnes that keeps things active from start to Finnish. This two-voice, two-guitar, bass, flute, keyboards and drum lineup, on their third album, delivers a J.R.R. Tolkien-inspired dreamscape of Middle

Earth without overdone computer programming. More like Jethro Tull's **Songs From The Wood** than Iron Maiden's **Sanctuary**, **Third Age Of The Sun** is visual in conception, easy on the ears and good to go for those who want to get away from reality for a mere 49:54.

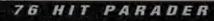
Subterranean Masquerade is enraging more people than it's pleasing but I love its Suspended Animation Dreams, a cut'n'paste pastiche of music styles. Problem is, there's so many palettes, so many different kinds of sound, that fans of one avenue will want to split when a diametrically opposed avenue is trod upon. A gravelly-voiced lowball Death Metal cookie monster voice gets all showbiz-satanic but instead of thrash chords, it's jazz-lite cocktail music behind him! Like a musical montage, or the crazy collage of images I pasted to the walls of my bachelor apartment of baseball players, naked girls, wrestlers and rock stars, this Masquerade goes ballistic in its kitchen-sink mentality. No wonder metal fans are peeved! Maybe they expected something more like the band's 2004 Temporary Psychotic State EP. Band founder Tomer Pink calls it a "dysfunctional musical revolution."

Utilizing such disparate elements as guitars, horns, strings, spoken word passages, church choir, harmonica, bells, organ, electronica, Novembers Doom vocalist Paul Kuhr, and Orphaned Land vocalist Kobi Farhi (who traveled from Israel to Utah for the session), it was produced by Grammy Award-winning Motorhead producer Neil Kernon, who mix'n'matched the metal, pop, jazz, folk, classical, worldbeat, prog-rock and rock'n'roll into one not-quite cohesive whole.

Lest anyone think I only like wildly divergent carnivalesque soundscapes, let me conclude these "Musings" by mentioning the mono-maniacal **Jacknife**, whose **Moment Of Reckoning** stays the course for 36 minutes of like-minded bombast. It doesn't alter. It doesn't swerve. "We have no gimmicks," says shouter Joe Ortiz of this Dallas quintet whose metalcore sound can only be described as heavy, heavier and heaviest. Oh, and fast, faster, and fastest. Guitarslingers Mike Warren and Steve Pruett do the obligatory shred routine while drummer Tommy Crooks and bassist Joseph Fontenot act as one.

"The band's sound is getting more toward where we want it to be," says the singer. "I keep the vocals heavy throughout." Whew! That's an understatement. Ortiz must have burned-out lungs by now if he keeps this up. Those in the first row when Jacknife opened for Slayer, Killswitch Engage, Lamb Of God, Agnostic Front and Machine Head must've been hit in the face with flying pieces of esophagus! The band claims Megadeth, Anthrax, Overkill and Meshuggah as influences. At least they've done their homework

See you next month. I have to wash my ears out. They're ringing like crazy and I can't seem to hear anything right now.—Mike Greenblatt.



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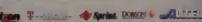
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f they hang around long enough, bands invariably experience a series of "highs" and "lows" throughout their career. It's just the way of rock and roll life. Such has certainly been the case for the Swedish hard rock unit Blindside who after having their previous two discs— Blindside and A Thought Crushed My Mind— enjoy major label distribution, see their latest effort emerge through an indie outlet. Perhaps that's why vocalist Christian, guitarist Simon, bassist Tomas and drummer Marcus have chosen to title their latest outing The Great Depression.

"Actually, that would make a very good story," Christian said. "But it wouldn't be the truth. We're very happy to have the album come out on a label where we feel we have more control over every aspect of what's going on. We're at the point in our career where that kind of control is vital for our survival."

Blindside has more than survived... for the most part they've prospered. With the release of their third State-side album, this power-packed quartet has once again proven that they've got what it takes to make a successful run at the top of the charts. But despite the occasional runs at the Big Time that they've enjoyed over the last decade, success has never come easily for Blindside. For years this Scandinavian unit found themselves struggling to gain a solid grip on the ever-

## "We're at a point in our career where we crave control."

unpredictable Euro-metal market. But then, just as they were beginning to wonder if they'd ever break out of the mundane confines provided by the Swedish rock scene, they happened to encounter the members of American rap/metal supergroup P.O.D., and the rest, as we soften say, is history.

"Meeting the people in P.O.D. changed our lives," Simon said. "We could relate to P.O.D., and they could relate to us— even if our backgrounds and homelands were very far apart. Suddenly we found that we were with people who knew what it was like to struggle, and then attain all of their dreams. Their support made all the difference to us.'

What that support did was convince Blindside to keep pushing their creative parameters, something they've continued to do on their latest release. Upon listening to the incendiary contents of **The Great Depression** it's easy to understand why many music biz insiders still hold high hopes for Blindside's stellar status. From the hypnotic energy of *Ask Me Now* to the raucous power of *Heartattack*, it is clear that this is a unit still determined to make a major impression upon the hard rock scene. With a string of successful albums to their credit, and tours with the likes of Linkin Park, P.O.D. and Papa

Roach under their belt, Blindside now seem determined to take the next major step in their career.

.Fact is, the members of Blindside have been working on fulfilling their rock and roll dream for more than a decade. It was back in 1994 that this Stockholmbased unit first began to realize that their rather unconventional approach to hard rock song writing served to separate them from the rest of the Swedish music crowd. The group finally got around to recording a self-titled debut in 1999. That effort won rave reviews throughout Scandinavia, but fell on relatively deaf ears throughout the rest of the world. Undaunted, the band rocked on, releasing a second album, **A Thought Crushed My Mind**, in 2002. It was that effort that opened things up for this hard rocking contingent. And now with the release of The Great Depression, Blindside believe that their diligence is about to pay off in a big way.

"We finally feel comfortable being in front of the world," Christian said. When you go from being popular in one part of the world, and then start having your music released everywhere it's both very exciting and very intimidating. You suddenly go from a position of being relatively comfortable to one where you're starting

all over again in many places."

78 HIT PARADER

[ VampireFreaks.com ]

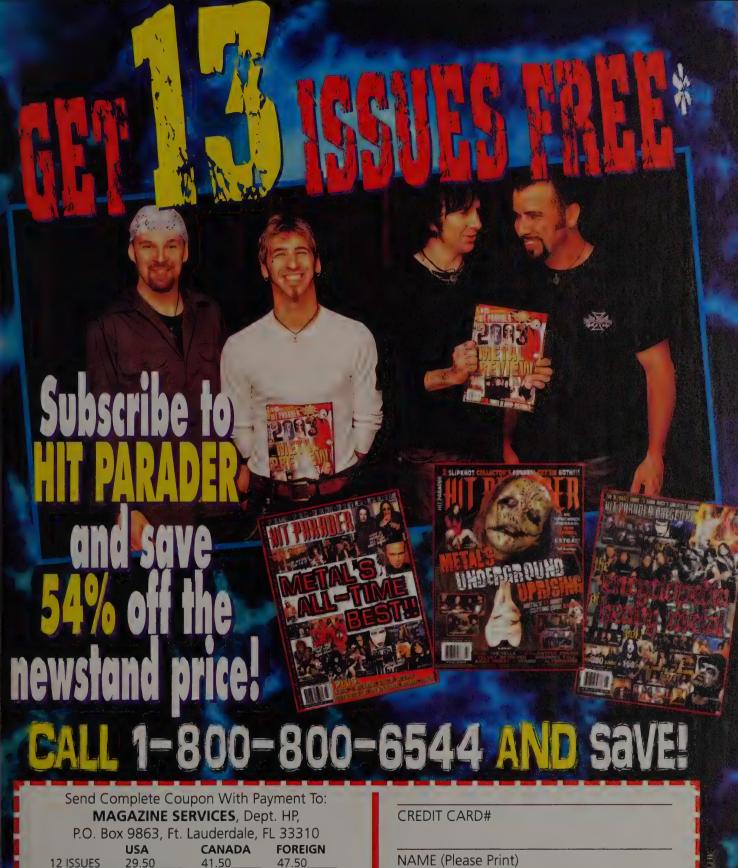
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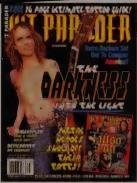
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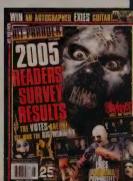
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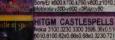
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# TOYS IN THE ATTIC

THE COOLEST GAMES & GEAR

BY FRANK CAFIERO

A great cataclysm struck the dragon nation, killing the king, destroying their civilization and causing the disappearance of the sole heir to the dragon throne, the king's son. The dragons that survived the great disaster fled to many hidden points of the globe.

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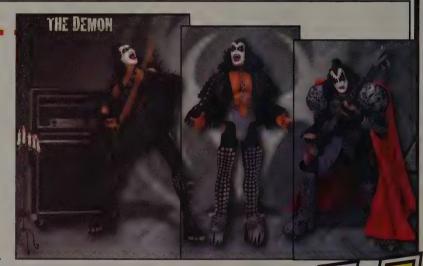
McFarlane Toys has captured this mythical beast in an incredible detailed, beautifully painted, limited collectors edition. To find out more about this or other McFarlane toys go to www.spawn.com

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So if you're part of the Kiss Army hurry out to get these amazing collectors figures. For more info go to www.MacFarlane.com.





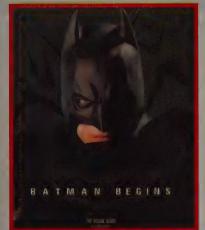


## **PUNK DIARY**

Punk Diary is a day-by-day account of exactly how this historic and mythologized era came to pass. Here's all the data, important and trivial, presented to you just as it unfolded through an astounding 13 years. The early '70s were a dreary time for music. The latest thing seemed to be introspective singer-songwriters who poured their souls into convoluted lyrics and strummy-strummy noodling, or the ponderous, overproduced hogwash of Styx, Genesis, Yes, and their ilk. There was nothing that the average kid could hope to identify with. They couldn't participate. What was needed was to roll back the clock to the mid '60s when garage bands could plunk out a few raw chords and produce a rattle that would send parents running for their earplugs. By the time 1975 came around, the stage was not only set for a revolution in music, the players were already in the wings, warming up.

There is no other book that so clearly shows how all the pieces fit together, or that lets you be your own rock analyst armed with an expert's fact file. No opinions here, only the day-to-day reality, just as if you were living it all over again, or for the very first time.

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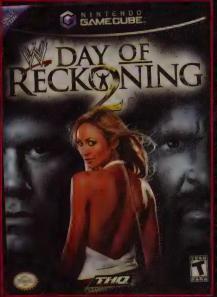
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in ether single or two-player co-op gameplay. Play as Liu Kang or Kung Lao, each with their own unique repertoire of four "Attack Styles" plus Special Attacks, and Fatalities. Unlock additional characters and abilities through various gameplay systems.

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To find out more about Mortal Kombat: Shaolin Monks, go to ww.mkmonks.com



's amazing what a single song can do for a band's career. It can almost instantly transform a previously unknown act into a unit whose name is on everyone's tongue, and whose sound is in everyone's ear. Point-in-fact, consider what the song Cold has done for Crossfade over the last 18 months, it's taken this South Carolina-based hard rock quar tet on a dizzying trek up the contemporary music mountain, in the process turning the unit's self-titled debut disc into one of the most commercially successful hard rock outings of the 21st Century. But for vocalist/guitarist Ed Sloan, bassist Mitch James, keybordist Tony Byroads and drummer Brian Geiger, the success of their album and single have not been the totally overwhelming, life-changing events that they've been for many previous bands. Indeed, if truth be known, these unassuming-yet-confident dudes kind a expected their music to cause exactly this kind of commotion

"We write good songs, and we're confident in our ability," Sloan said. "I don't want to sound arrogant, but when we started putting this album together, I think we all looked at one another and smiled. We knew we had some really good stuff going on here. We knew that having good songs didn't mean that we were going to be successful, but we felt good in that we were presenting ourselves

in the best manner we possibly could."

That "best possible manner" approach has won wide-spread support for Crossfade's heavy-yet-accessible style. Since the release of their album in the spring of 2004, they've practically lived on the road, bringing their distinctive style to just about every town, city and hamlet on the face of the North American continent. And all that hard work has paid off... and paid off BIG! At a time when selling 100,000 units has become the new benchmark of success for a "baby" band, **Crossfade** has sold over 600,000 copies—with no immediate end in sight to this commercial gold rush. And, understandably, Crossfade have taken great pride in their accomplishments—in no-small-part due to the fact that these guys were allowed to produce the contents of their self-titled debut album themselves! But not only was this quartet granted their production wish, as proven throughout Crossfade they've done one heck of a job at communicating their multi-faceted, surprisingly melodic tales of rock and roll woe!

'We've been working on our own material— from the writing, to the recording, to the producing— for years," Sloan said. "So the idea of producing this one ourselves kind'a came naturally. But the fact of the matter is that most of the material featured on this album were songs we had already recorded in our own studio. In fact, we were planning on releasing the album ourselves—but the people at the label stepped in at the last minute, asked us to come to New York to perform a couple of showcases, and right after that they signed us to a deal. So we really didn't have that much to do on the album. We allowed someone to come in and re-mix a few of the tracks, but the rest of the work is all ours.'

Upon listening to Crossfade, it's easy to hear the attention to detail that this band has infused into their music, despite-or perhaps due to— the fact that the disc clocks in at a rather paltry 34 minutes total playing time. Blending highly melodic elements with powerful instrumental blasts, the sound this unit creates on Cold, stands as a kind of bastardized cross between Puddle of Mudd, Alice In Chains and Staind... with a smidgen of Metallica thrown in for good measure. But rather than sounding like the increasingly standard 21st Century hard rock rip-off, the four members of Crossfade have managed to fill the disc with just enough originality of sound and spirit to separate themselves from their pervasive influences.

I remember being introduced to Metallica's music when I was a kid," Sloan said. "That was a life-changing experience for me. That led me to forming my first band when I was 14. But after that, things started to change for me. I started to listen to less and less music and started to focus on my own creative outlets. That's where the foundation of this band comes from. But over the last few years, music has started to intrigue me again-especially bands like the Deftones and Staind. I can understand the motivation behind what they're playing. But I like to think that they've served more as an

inspiration for me than as a direct influence'

Indeed it seems as if young Mr. Sloan is a rather complicated musical cat. His own musician, his own producer as well as his own motivational source, he clearly stands at the focal point of the Crossfade attack. Despite his still-tender years, he admits to already having spent over a decade in bands with such names as Darkchilde and the Nothing while waiting for his true musical vision to take hold. But by 2002, as they toiled away along the Southeastern club circuit, Crossfade's music began to come into full fruition. And despite the band's initial intent to release their self-produced debut disc on their own. when a major label

expectations

saw the inherent brilliance of the band's approach, these four couldn't deny the advisability of following the proverbial "money trail." So far, it's worked like a

"We knew this album was good but it exceeded charm. Certainly some cynics may insist that the down-at-themouth philosophies espoused in such songs as Dead Skin, Starless and The Deep End may eventually grow to sound a bit

tedious to a generation weaned on post-Nirvana artistic angst. But with Sloan's scruffy good looks lending a "face" to the proceedings, and Crossfade's songs providing a "voice" to a new generation of hard rock fans, these rockers feel confident that the multi-layered texture of their material will keep finding receptive ears throughout the rock community. We want to write music that can reach across barriers and make people stay in love with rock music," Sloan said. "We want to take this band beyond the boundaries of genre or age. We're so lucky in that we've been able to reach out and touch a lot of people with our music. We've done that through our album, through our videos and through our tours. But we think this is only the begin-

ning. We're learning so much every day and we can't wait to put it

all to use the next time we go into the studio."



# INSTRUMENTALLY SPEAKING

BY MICHAEL SHORE

# YAMAHA

We've covered all manner of Yamaha gear - electric and acoustic guitars. basses, synths, and drums - from professionally endorsed top-of-theline to bargain-priced entry level instruments, including the GigMaker packages which offer superb values that bundle together excellent guitars, amps and accessories at incredibly low prices. Yamaha has now expanded the GigMaker line with new electric guitar and bass packages, which is terrific news for beginners and students, for those whose wallets might be a bit pinched, and anyone who simply sees no reason not to get a convenient, comprehensive, good-to-go high-quality package at a ridiculously good price. The GigMaker EG (yes, EG as in Electric Guitar) includes

a Yamaha PAC012 Pacifica solid-body electric guitar - a hot-sounding, playable axe with Strat-style body, comfortable fast-action neck, versatile pickup array with two single-coils and a bridge-position humbucker, chrome tuners and chrome tremolo. Available in black, Metallic Dark Blue or Metallic Red finishes with white pickguard, it's backed by Yamaha's limited lifetime warranty. But wait there's more! This is a package deal as we said, and the package also includes a 2-channel Drive amp that sounds bigger and hotter than its 20 watt rating might lead you to expect, a Qwik Tune digital chromatic tuner, guitar strap, protective gig bag, instructional DVD, and even extra strings and picks. All for \$419.99.

Yamaha's GigMaker EB for bassists features an RBX170 four-string, one of Yamaha's most popular basses, with a sleek, solid Agathis body, maple neck

with rosewood fingerboard, chrome tuners and bridge, and exceptionally versatile electronics that include dual P/J-style pickups and passive tone control Available in the same array of finishes and with the same limited lifetime warranty as the Pacific guitar in the EG package, the RBX EB also comes with a 20-watt multifunction Drive bass amp, gig bag, strap, Qwik Tune digital chromatic tuner, cable and instructional DVD...all for \$469.99. Like we said, these are amazing bargains - and as low as the prices are, the quality's high enough that the GigMakers are fit for anyone, not just beginners or the budget-minded.

And if you're looking to upgrade your strap for maximum playing comfort, Yamaha's brought new meaning to the term "air guitar" with a new line of straps: the GSAC "Air Cell" straps, which use shouldersaving "air cell technology" with multiple, individually encased air cells on the underside



the heavy-duty reinforced-Lycra strap. It's the same technology used to carry expensive, sensitive photography and video equipment. Having each cell individually encased means that in the unlikely event one cell punctures, the strap remains fully functional and still offers flexibility and cushioning for the heaviest instruments. And the strap's woven construction ensures that the strap lies smoothly on the shoulder, moves easily on clothing or skin, and wicks away moisture. GSAC Air Cell straps are fully adjustable from 45" to 52" lengths, and are available in 3" (Model GSAC, \$34.99) and 2" (Model GSAC2, \$29.99) widths.

For more on these and the rest of Yamaha's huge array of gear, visit www.yamaha.com online or write Yamaha Corp. of America, Pro Audio & Combo Division (Guitar Products for the GigMakers, Accessory Products for the straps), P.O. Box 6600, Buena Park, CA, 90622.

96 HIT PARADER



# A GUIDE TO THE LATEST GEAR





Hiwatt, the British amplifier company

made legendary by such guitarists as Pete Townshend of The Who and David Gilmour of Pink Floyd, continues the comeback we've been covering in the past several issues with an ever-expanding line of classic-sounding amps, made in a way that combines old-fashion point-to-point handcrafting with the most up-to-date technology. There are heads, cabinets, and as we feature this month, combos. The Studio/Stage MKII can switch from 20 to 40 watts of power while retaining a pure Class A tone, thanks to a specially wound output transformer; features include High and Low Sensitivity inputs; Gain with switchable boost; bass, mid and treble controls; full-size Accutronic spring reverb;

Master Volume control; and two 12-inch Fane speakers. The Custom 50, based on Hiwatt's original legendary "Bulldog" combo amp, is a compact dynamo with a 50 watt head and a specially designed Fane speaker in an 18-marine ply cabinet. The Custom 20 is a fire-breathing Class A monster with four 12AX7 preamp tubes for massive gain, a master volume plus individual gain, bass, mid and treble controls, and a power section with two EL-84 power tubes for a clear linear tone. Finally, there are the Hiwatt Signature combos, based on Townshend and Gilmour's custom modifications of the Custom 100. Townshend's CP103 has extended gain and a more responsive bass and treble

tubes for a clear linear tone. Finally, there are the Hiwatt Signature combos, based on Townshend and Gilmour's custom modifications of the Custom 100. Townshend's CP103 has extended gain and a more responsive bass and treble control network, with four independent preamp channels (with four ECC83 tubes), four individual volume controls, and a master volume, plus four EL34 tubes in the power section as in the classic Custom 100; input impedance is switchable from 4 to 8 to 16 ohms. Gilmour's DG103 adds some modern, and very specifically tailored sophistica-

tion to the classic performance amp: along with the tupical master volume, bass, mid and treble controls, there's also a specially linked input system that can alter each channel's gain to suit different musical styles. It also has four EL34 power tubes, and four EC63 preamp tubes. For more on these and Hiwatt's many other amps and accessories, head online to www.hiwatt.com.







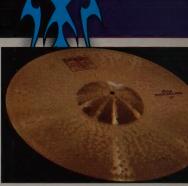


# **EVANS EC-2 DRUMHEAD**

British drumhead maker Evans has taken overtone-control to a whole new level with its new EC2 heads, which have an Edge Control Ring (thus the EC designation) that dampens high overtones and enhances low-end attack, but that won't choke at higher tunings or lose its unique full-bodied sound and presence at lower tunings, like many dampening heads — so it gives you a wider tuning range to work with. It's also unique among dampening heads in that while controlling extreme highs, it maintains a warm tome and a very focused attack - no doubt due at least in part to such subtle but crucial construction details as "stress-relief slots" which let the ring flex with the head's vibration and eliminate any dampening-ring interference with the all-important contact-point between the head and drum shell's bearing edge. So it succeeds where other such heads fail: again, the key is that it controls, rather than completely removing, edge vibration. It's also very durable, is made for snare drums and toms, and comes in 8", 10", 12", 13", 14" and 16" sizes. For more info on these and Evans' other heads and accessories, check out www.evansdrumheads.com online.



# INSTRUMENTALLY SPEAKING DRUM





Paiste, based in Switzerland, has been around for some time too, though not quite as long as Zildjian, and while it got a comparatively late start on the American market Zildjian had cornered

since the early 20th Century at least, Paiste caught up fast starting in the 1970s when British rock drummers like John Bonham with Led Zeppelin and Bill Bruford with King Crimson made their extremely bright, splashy sound and very visible underside logos famous. Like Zildjian, Paiste too keeps adding innovations and refinements to its many different lines of cymbals, aimed at all styles of music from soft to loud.

Paiste's 2002 series has long been one of THE state-of-the-art standards for loud rock music, with a glass-shattering brilliance that cuts through anything. Paiste's latest expansion of the line includes a ton of new rides, crashes, and speciality cymbals, such as: the 20" and 22" Wild Ride, with a huge, dirty sound; the 20" Rock Ride, darker, sweeter and more controllable than the Wild Ride though still bright and energetic in characteristic Paiste fashion; the 20" and 22" Rock Bell Ride with a massive stick sound and full, heavy feel; and the 24" MegaBell Rock Ride - even fuller, heavier, more massive, with a bell so enormous it could sound vespers at your local church!

There are also new 2002 Rock Crashes, in odd and even sizes from 16" through 20", with a heavy feel, powerful attack, and an unusually strong fade and a full tonal mix that, while cutting through like crazy of course, is surprisingly a bit darker than one might expect for a heavier cymbal, especially one from Paiste which has always been known to use uniquely high-pitched alloys. And there's a new 18" Rock China, with Paiste's typical squared-off bell to facilitate upside-down mounting for tighter, more clipped accents; rightside up it has longer sustain than most of their Chinas, with an explosive, trashy sound. Its unique hammering pattern is reminiscent of Paiste's vintage "Rude" cymbals, and the sound lives up to that expectation. For more on these and Paiste's enormous range of other cymbals, gongs, accessories and even cymbal-alloy snare drums, check out www.paiste.com online.





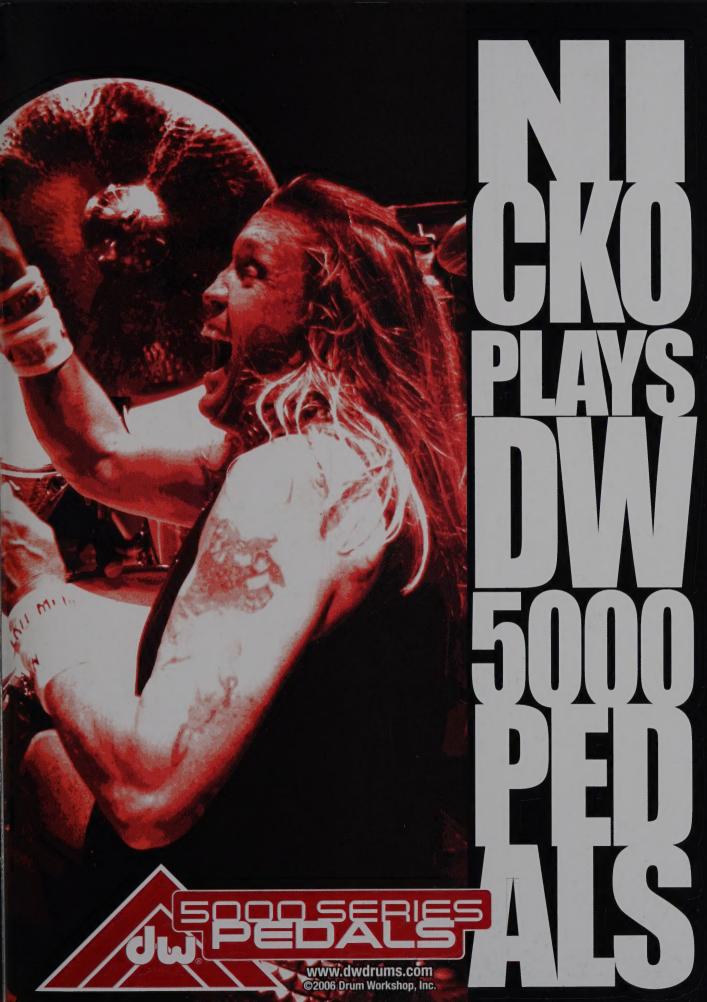




## ZILDJIAN

Cymbals, cymbals and more cymbals this month - from the two most venerable names in the field, Zildjian and Paiste. Nobody's more venerable than Zildjian, the family firm of Turkish origin that's been around for centuries. They've added seven new medium crashes to their A Custom line, which is a modern update on their classic A. Zildjian cymbals: not too dark, not too bright, adding more punch to the traditional powerful yet musical Zildjian sound, with radical rotary hammering and brilliant finishes making for a sweet yet crisp sound. The new Medium Crashes are the heaviest weight crashes in the A Custom line, which gives them a higher-pitched sound that does not sacrifice shimmer and musicality, with a louder, extremely cutting attack and medium decay. They come in 14, 15, 16, 16, 18, 19 and 20" sizes.

Zildjian has also added some rock models to its ZBT line of affordable Sheet Bronze cymbals, which are some of the best cymbal bargains around. The new 14" Rock hi-hats, 16" and 18" Rock Crashes and 20" Rock Ride are all heavier weight to stand up to harder playing, but the weight also gives them a brighter sound and louder projection to cut through amplification. The hats have a cutting "chick," the ride a penetrating ping and clean bell over minimal wash, the crashes are precise, punching through and getting out of the way quickly. ZBTs can be purchased separately or in factory-matched box sets. For more on these and Zildjian's many, many other cymbals, gongs, sticks and other accessores, head to www.zildjian.com online.



# TROY VAN LEEUWEN

gueens of the stone age

SA503 TVL TROY VAN LEEUWFN SIGNATURE

> YAMAHA GUITARS

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